



## Students' Attitude and Behavioural Intention towards Higher Educational Institutions

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### ABSTRACT

*Today, the increase in educational opportunities, gives the present day students various options of selecting the institutions which will give them the highly appreciable educational experiences. Also, today's student is treated as the customer seeking an educational program that will prepare him/her for a successful career and gainful employment. Organisations to be successful and to face the present competition and satisfy their customer it is essential to analyze the attitude of the customer. It is also clear that the services offered by various educational institutions are similarly priced and look alike. The winners will be the one who provide excellent service quality. It is well known that service quality and customer satisfaction are becoming the most important factors of business success for service providers. As per Kotler and Lane (2006), "Quality is a key to value creation and customer satisfaction. Higher levels of quality result in higher levels of customer satisfaction, which supports higher prices and often lower costs. Analyses of attitude provide marketers a full understanding of consumer behavior than do demographics alone. The trend in service marketing towards building relationships with customers continues to grow, and marketers have become increasingly interested in retaining customers over the long run. The current study aims to analyze "The students' attitude and behavioural intention towards higher educational institutions". The study is based on the primary data collected from higher educational institutions offering management courses in Coimbatore city with the help of a structured questionnaire designed based on the Theory of planned behavior (TPB). The findings of the study states that student's intention to join the institution is influenced mainly by attitude and perceived behavioural control whereas subjective norm has no specific impact on the students' intention to join the institution.*

**Keywords : Students attitude, TPB, Higher educational institution.**

### Introduction

In a highly competitive market environment, satisfaction of customers with products and services make the difference (Kerlin, 2000; Zeithaml 2000; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry 1996). As the features, quality and appearance of products and services become increasingly similar (by extension, more and more difficult to differentiate) customers increasingly exhibit unpredictable and non loyal purchasing behaviours. In response to the present 'price war' tactics, organisations are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of customer satisfaction and the need to maintain a core group of loyal customers. A satisfied customer might well become a regular buyer and also spreads positive word of mouth communication which might result in creating new customers and negative word-of-mouth communication leads to reduction in customer satisfaction (Richins, 1983)

### Higher education in India

In keeping with the socio-economic and cultural transformation that has created newer demands on the educational system, in terms of greater responsibility and accountability and increased expectations by stakeholders,

the system has been pressurized to shift its focus from quantitative expansion to emphasis on quality. Such shifts and changes are being witnessed not only in the developed countries, but also in the developing countries of the world. The education system, and in particular the higher education system is in an position to react to the demands and ever increasing pressures from its stakeholders, finds itself in a market-oriented environment, with internal and external customers; wherein, "delighting the customer", is the canon for continuous endurance for these institutions in the long run. "Delighting the customer", is the core message of total quality management. As per Kotler and Lane (2006), "Quality is a key to value creation and customer satisfaction. Higher levels of quality result in higher levels of customer satisfaction, which supports higher prices and often lower costs. The winners will be the one who provide excellent service quality. . It is well known that service quality and customer satisfaction are becoming the most important factors of business success for service providers. It is also clear that the services offered by various educational institutions are similarly priced and look alike. Organisations to be successful and to face the present competition and satisfy their customer it is essential to analyze the attitude of the customer. Analyses of attitude provide marketers a full understanding of consumer behavior than do demographics alone.

The trend in service marketing towards building relationships with customers continues to grow, and marketers have become increasingly interested in retaining customers over the long run and hence, there is a need to identify and analyze the attitude and behavior of customers to sustain long term survival and development of the educational institutions.

Many of the administrators have now realized that the importance of understanding the knowledge of customer's behavior. This may help them in framing the marketing tools and techniques to attract the customers. (Kennedy 2001) suggested that marketing and recruiting are the two main activities that administrators have to concentrate on. (Athiyaman, 1997; Elliott & Healy, 2001; DeShields et al., 2005; Helgesen & Nettet, 2007) reported that student satisfaction has been related to recruitment and retention and academic success which has lead university administrators to pay great attention to those factors that help them to more effectively attract students and create a supportive learning environment. Given the diversity of students' goals in pursuing a college degree and the variety of institutional missions, the challenge is to attract and retain those students that are best matched to the university's capabilities and to develop competences at the university that will better serve the needs of diverse student population. Administrators and educators also recognize that understanding the needs and wants of students and meeting their expectations are important to develop environments in which students can learn effectively (Seymour, 1993; Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994). It is also essential to find the factors that influence the students in joining the institution.

The researchers have found that there are more than 20 factors that affect the decision making process of the students. (Bakers 1996) in his study says that the most significant factors that attract the students towards joining the particular institution were, high quality of institutions, quality of the courses offered, reputation of the course, cost of education and potential for improved job offers after completing the course. According to Kemp et al, 1998 living environment and geographical proximity are the two factors that are believed to be important in the decision making process to join the institution.

### Consumer Behavior in Education Sector

Consumer behavior in education focuses on the three component of Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen 1975) of student's intention to join the institution. (Hawkins et al, 1994) stated that various studies on consumer behavior analyses the behavior of the consumer to find potential market opportunities and to determine the appropriate marketing plan in order to develop practical and effective marketing strategies for various organisations. Analyzing the student's behavior in selecting the educational institutions can help the marketers to have a deeper understanding of the complex consumer behavior. Sound knowledge about how students are influenced by various attributes before joining the educational institution is important for competing and surviving in the market place (Moogan et al., 1999). The variables that influence the consumer behavior, for instance: environmental, cultural, social class (Kindra et al, 1994) family influence (Hawkins et al, 1994) and attitudinal influences (Engel et al., 1990) attitude is considered as the most important variable that is analyzed most often by the marketers and researchers to understand the customer (Hawkins et al, 1994 and Engel et al., 1990). This study attempts to examine the factors influencing the student's intention to join the institution using the Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). This study mainly focuses the influence of the three components of Ajzen model towards the behavioural intention of students in joining the educational institution.

### Theory of Planned Behaviour

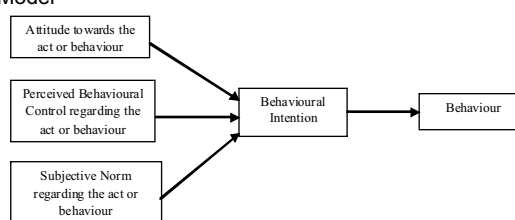
TPB describes the three major determining groups are to predict attitude towards behaviour (AB), Perceived behavioural control (PBC) and Subjective norm (SN). Attitude towards behaviour (AB) refers to the positive and negative belief that a person holds towards a particular behaviour. AB is the total of the product of the strength of each belief and the individual's perception of the outcomes associated with that belief (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1975)

TPB depicted as a central factor to influence a behaviour, which indicated 'how hard people are willing to try or how much of an effort they are planning to exert, in order to perform the behaviour' (Ajzen, 1991). However, not all behaviours could in fact be performed under people's volitional control, and most of the time, performance of behaviour depended on non-motivational factors, such as time, money, skills and cooperation of others (Ajzen, 1985). The availability of requisite opportunities and resources represented people's actual control over the behaviour, namely 'perceived behavioural control' (PBC).

A subjective norm (SN) refers to the perceived social pressures, arising from the influential persons in the individual's life that are associated with performing certain behaviours. The influence of students, parents, and teachers (Paolilli and Estes, 1982, Cangelosi et al, 1985, Gul et al, 1989, Geiger and Ogilby, 2000) close friends, and religious organisations, on the behaviour of individuals is measured by summing the product of the strength of each normative belief and the person's motivation to comply with their peers. (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1975)

TPB has been largely used and successfully applied to predict people's intention and behaviour (Ajzen, 1991). Figure 1.1 below describes the TPB model.

Figure 1.1: Theory of Planned Behavioural Model (TPB) Model



The assumption that individuals may encounter unexpected or uncontrolled obstacles that impede the execution of intention in the Theory of Planned Behaviour can be valid in predicting student's behaviour in joining the educational institution.

The purpose of this study is to analyse the influence of attitude, perceived behavioural control and subjective norm on student's intention to join the higher educational institution. The results of this study will help the educational institutions to understand the influence of these factors on student's intention to join the institution and therefore help them to plan the marketing strategies to attract the students towards their institution.

### Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study have been framed as follows:

- i) To study the demographic profile of the respondents.
- ii) To analyse the inter correlation between attitude, perceived behavioural control, subjective norm and students' intention to join the institution.
- iii) To study the impact of attitude, perceived behavioural control and subjective norm on the students' intention to join the institution.

### Review of Literature

The past studies related to the subject of the current research are reviewed. It includes studies related to students' choice of educational institutions, factors influencing such behaviour and reviews related to the application of the Theory of Planned Behaviour.

Researchers have looked into the importance of customer satisfaction (Kotler, 2000) defined satisfaction as "person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment results from comparing a products perceived performance (or outcome) in relation to his or her expectations". The key of achieving organizational goals consists in determining the needs and wants of target markets and delivering the desired satisfaction more effectively and efficiently than competitors' (Kotler, 1991, p.10)

The students' choice of institutions for higher education is a form of consumer decision making behaviour which includes both objective and subjective elements. There are numerous factors which can influence the consumers like environmental, cultural and attitudinal influences (Engel et al, 1990); social class (Kindra et al, 1994); family influence (Hawkins et al, 1994); availability of employment and earnings (Paolillo and Estes, 1982) and parents influence (Cangelosi et al, 1985). Apart from few studies, many prior studies lack a conceptual framework making it difficult to explain students' choice of institutions.

In making career choices, students may be further influenced by their instructors, parents, relatives, friends, or high school teachers. A counselor or adviser may shape students' perceptions about institution and the profession (Marshall, 2003). However, empirical evidence shows mixed results. Understanding students' choice of institutions 235 studies suggest that teachers or instructors do not play a significant role in students' choice (Cangelosi et al., 1985; Gul et al., 1989) whereas other studies (Paolillo and Estes, 1982; Hermanson and Hermanson, 1995; Geiger and Ogilby, 2000; Mauldin et al., 2000) suggest that individual instructors have a profound influence on students' decisions. Empirical evidence regarding the influence of referents, other than instructors, was also inconclusive. Cangelosi et al. (1985) found that friends do not influence most students in their choice of the institution. Gul et al. (1989) note that parental influence is not a significant factor in students' institutional choice decisions. Similarly, Paolillo and Estes (1982), Hermanson (1995), and Lowe and Simons (1997) indicate that friends, parents and high school teachers are less influential factors in students' institutional choices. In contrast, Inman et al. (1989) and Mauldin et al. (2000) found that parents followed by instructors, have a strong influence on students' choice of institutions.

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1988) is one conceptual framework that has been used to provide a better understanding of the factors that influence students' choice of institutions for higher education. The TPB has been widely adopted as one of the most powerful tools to test consumers' behavioral intention (Ajzen, 2001). Ajzen (1985) extended roots from the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and hypothesized three components underneath a person's behavioral intentions. He adopted two components from the TRA: an attitudinal component and a normative component. The TRA, which consists of only the attitudinal and normative components, was often criticized because it assumes that all human behaviors are volitional and rational (Chang, 1998) in other words, an individual has full control over his or her behavior. However, not all behaviors are fully volitional or fully controlled by consumers due to various factors (Sheppard et al., 1988). For example, when a student chooses an institution for higher education, some factors may prevent him from making a rational decision. He may like program A, but it is very expensive so he has to turn to his parents; in this case, his parents have more controlling power than him. This is why the TPB adds a third component called perceived

behavioral control (PBC) (Hansen et al, 2004). Many studies have confirmed that the TPB predicts behavior intention more accurately than the TRA (Madden et al., 1992; Taylor and Todd, 1995).

According to TPB, attitude towards the behavior is referred to the positive or negative feelings an individual has on a particular behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980). It is an attitude which has been conceptualized from the evaluation of the behavior. Attitude towards behavior is a function of one's salient belief about performing the behavior and an evaluation of the outcomes resulting from the behavior (Chang, 1998). According to Ghen and Liu (2004), attitude is a main factor influencing behavioural intention. Attitude can be used to predict behavioural intention (Ajzen and Driver, 1992). Further, Bock and Kim (2002) maintained that individual attitude influences behavioural intention. Ramayah et al (2003) analyzed the data from Malaysian sample of 239 bank customers and found that attitude positively influenced the intention to use Internet banking. Chan and Yu (2008) also documented that the attitude on participation in eco-travel through the use of the Internet has a positive significant relationship with the behavioural intention to participate in eco-travel.

Subjective norm (SN) refers to the social pressure an individual has on whether to complete behavior or not. This is a person's belief that the salient referent thinks he or she should (or should not) perform the behavior (Chang, 1998). A number of studies revealed that at a certain level, social pressures, such as peers, parents, teachers and relatives, influence enrollment choices (Ray, 1991; Koballa, 1998). Bock and Kim (2002) and Ryu et al (2003) documented that subjective norm can influence behavioural intention. Kuo et al (2007) showed that as subjective norm becomes more positive, behavioural intention to participate also becomes more positive. However, a number of researchers (Sparks et al., 1995) have found that the subject norm component of the TPB is inadequate and rarely predicts intention. In regard to enrollment intention, some researchers (Dawson and O'Connor, 1991; Crawley and Black, 1992; Butler, 1999) also found that subject norm was less important in determining enrolment choices than attitude towards the enrolment. Further, Titah and Barki (2009) had identified a substitution relationship or negative synergy between intention and subjective norm.

Perceived Behavior Control (PBC) refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior. Since the introduction of the TRA, many researchers have questioned the theory. Researchers suggested that besides individual's control behavior, there were other factors which also influence human behavior, such as facilitating factors (Triandis, 1977), the context of opportunity (Sarver, 1983), resources (Liska, 1984) or action control (Kuhl, 1985). To increase the prediction capacity, Ajzen (1985, 1991) extended the TRA by adding a third construct, namely PBC. For students, the choice of institutions is also influenced by the PBC factors, such as how easily they can find the tuition fee, and how easily they can make a decision about the choice of institution. According to Blue (1996), PBC not only influences the intention of an individual towards engaging in leisure activities, but it also directly affects the individual's actual leisure behaviour. Perceived behavioural control has been identified to be a significant factor influencing the behavioural intention, especially in a situation beyond the individual's control (Schifter and Ajzen, 1985). Ryu et al (2003) carried out a study on the knowledge sharing behaviour of physicians in hospitals and concluded that perceived behavioural control directly influences intention to share knowledge. Among the factors influencing the behavioural intention of citizens towards participation, perceived behavioural control is found to be the most influencing one (Yang et al, 2007b). It is also understood that if the perceived behavioural control of an individual becomes more positive, the behavioural intention to participate also becomes more positive (Kuo et al, 2007).

The previous research studies have elaborated the application of the TPB in various decision making domains such as knowledge sharing, internet banking and e-commerce. But the application of TPB to describe students' institutional choice in Indian context is inadequate. Hence an attempt is made to apply the constructs of the theory of planned behavior namely attitude, perceived behavioural control and subjective norm to students' intention towards joining the higher educational institutions.

### Methodology

For the purpose of studying the objectives and testing the hypotheses, a questionnaire was used as an instrument to collect the data. The questionnaire has been divided into two parts so as to fulfil the objectives of the study. The first part captures the demographic characteristics of the respondents and their attitude towards behaviour, perceived behavioural control, subjective norm and intention are captured separately in the second part of the questionnaire. The items that capture each part are developed by the researcher. However they are subjected to validity and reliability test. The face and content validity was conducted with five experts in the field of higher education. The experts were explained about the items that capture attitude, perceived behavioural control, subjective norm and intention. Then, the validity of each item in capturing the adequate information required for the study was queried. Further, they were requested to offer their feedback on each of the items. The experts suggested a 5-point rating scales for all the items that capture attitude, perceived behavioural control, subjective norms and intention. Also, a few statements were simplified so as to enable the respondents to understand it better.

The geographical area of Coimbatore city was chosen for the study. The main reason for choosing Coimbatore city is that it is considered to be the educational hub with more than 100 institutions offering management education. The sample size for the study constitutes 120 respondents who are doing MBA program. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was used to choose the respondents. The data used for the purpose of analysis in this study was collected for a period of two months from May 2011 to June 2011. The techniques used for analysis are Factor analysis, Correlation and Multiple regression analysis.

### Reliability Test

The data collected from the respondents are subjected to reliability test using Cronbach Alpha.

Table 1 : Reliability Coefficients using Cronbach Alpha

S. No.	Dimensions	Reliability Coefficients
1.	Attitude towards Institution	0.82
2.	Perceived Behavioural Control	0.68
3.	Subjective Norms	0.75
4.	Intention to join institution	0.81

From the Table 1, it is found that the reliability coefficients for the variables chosen for this study are more than 0.60, which is an acceptable value (Malhotra, 2005). So, the item constituting each variable under study has reasonable internal consistency.

### Analysis And Interpretation

Analysis is the application of reasoning to understand and interpret the data that has been collected. In simple term, analysis refers to the measures for patterns of relationships among the data group. Hence in the course of exploring factors influencing the students' intention to join the institution for management education, the ideas supporting or conflicting with the literature was tested to indicate the conclusion. The analysis and interpretation is categorized

as follows.

Table 2 Demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 3 Factor loadings of Varimax rotated principal components

Table 4 Inter correlation between attitude, perceived behavioural control and subjective norm on intention.

Table 5 Multiple regression analysis relating to intention

Table 2 : Demographic characteristics of respondents

Variables	Categories	Number	Percentage
1) Gender	Male	52	43.3
	Female	68	56.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
2) Age	20-23 years	104	86.7
	24 years & Above	16	13.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>100</b>
		51	42.5
3) Under Graduation	Arts	18	15.0
	Science	34	28.3
	Engineering	17	14.2
	Others	120	100
	<b>Total</b>	84	70.0
4) Family Monthly Income (in Rs.)	Less than 50,000	19	15.8
	50,001 – 1,00,000	8	6.7
	1,00,001 – 1,50,000	9	7.5
	More than 1,50,000	120	100
	<b>Total</b>		

Table 2 gives the demographic characteristics of the respondents. It shows that 43.3% of the respondents are male and 56.7% of the respondents are female. Thus, majority of the respondents are female. Regarding the age of the respondents, it is found that 86.7% of the respondents belong to the age group of 20-23 years and the rest 13.3% of the respondents belong to the age group of 24 years & above. With regard to the under graduate qualification 42.5% of the respondents are from arts background, 28.3% of them are with engineering degree, 15% of them are from science background and 14.2% belong to other disciplines. As far as the family monthly income level of respondents 70% of them earn monthly income of less than Rs.50,000, 15.8% of them earn Rs. 50,000 – 1,00,000, 7.5% of the respondents earn more than Rs.1,50,000 and 6.7% of them earn Rs. 1,00,001 – 1,50,000.

The table 3 show the data regarding 27 statements analysed with the help of factor analysis and inter factor correlation analysis was performed. The factor analysis brought out 3 factors in all explaining 46.841% of total variance. The extracted communalities range from .147 to .794. For defining the clarity of the factor loadings more than 0.300 were considered.

The first factor named as 'Attitude towards the institution' loads significantly with institution is different from other institutions, institution will add weight-age, choice of institution is right, institution improves my personality, education provides international opportunities, education develops confidence, institution environment and culture helps learning, provides opportunity to communicate with others, institution provides me up to date knowledge, teaching methodology adopted makes me feel confident and all support service facilities is good in this institution. This factor indicates that students are influenced by the above discussed attitude related factors in selecting the institution.

The second factor (i.e) 'Perceived behavioural control' emphasize the presence of factors like nominal cost of education, willingness to know about management subject, willingness to get reputed professional degree, willingness to join because of academic background, to get good job offers, for career requirements, availability of international opportunities, easy admission procedures, service facilities, good faculty and nearness to residence in selecting the institutions for higher education. This factor highlights the fact that students tend to choose the institutions with lot of subjective factors.

Table 3 : Factor loadings of Varimax rotated principal components

Factors	Loadings	Eigen value	% of Variance
<b>F1 Attitude towards the institution</b>		6.788	23.407
I think the institution is different from other institutions	.553		
I think degree from this institution will add weightage	.725		
I think my choice of institution is right	.662		
The education at the institution will improve my personality	.715		
The education in this institution will provide international opportunities	.651		
The education in this institution will develop my confidence	.644		
The institution environment and culture will help in my learning	.440		
The institution will provide opportunity to communicate with others	.625		
The institution will provide me up to date knowledge			
The teaching methodology adopted in the institution will make me feel confident	.629		
All support service facilities is expected to be good in this institution	.601		
<b>F2 Perceived behavioural control</b>		4.867	16.784
I feel the cost of education is nominal	.652		
I want to join the institution to know about management subject	.374		
I like to join the institution to get reputed professional degree	.388		
I need to join the institution because of my academic background	.319		
I like to join the institution to get good job offers	.374		
I intend to join the institution because of my career requirement	.385		
I intend to join the institution because of the available international opportunities	.465		
I like to join the institution because of the easy admission procedures	.624		
I wanted to do the course because of the service facilities provided by the institution	.462		
I intend to join the institution because of good faculty	.456		
I intend to join this institution because it is near to my residence	.439		
<b>F3 Subjective Norm</b>		1.928	6.650
My family members compelled me to join the institution	.511		
My friends compelled me to join the institution	.888		
My organisation insisted me to join the institution	.850		
My teacher compelled me to join the institution	.832		
I intend to join the institution because of compulsion from others.	.813		
	.854		

The third factor namely 'Subjective norm' include the variables like compulsion from family members, friends, organization, teacher and others in choosing the institution for higher education. This factor stresses the presence of control factors in deciding the institution.

Two variables namely 'I join the institution to get a post-graduate degree' and 'I join the institution because most others join' did not load significantly on any factor. Hence they were excluded.

Table 4 : Inter factor correlation between attitude towards institution, perceived behavioural control and subjective norm

Factors	F1	F2	F3
F1	-		
F2	.706**	-	
F3	-.009	.463*	-
No. of Variables	11	11	5
Mean	45.30	42.20	11.21
SD	6.154	6.369	5.502

From Table 4, it can be interpreted that high positive correlation exist between Factor 1 and Factor 2 (i.e) Attitude towards institution and Perceived behavioural control. It is also seen that there is positive correlation between Factor 2 and Factor 3 (i.e) Perceived behavioural control and Subjective norm. Whereas the relationship between the Factor 1 and Factor 3 is negative. (i.e) Attitude and Subjective norm.

It is also seen that mean scores indicate that the strongest factor as 'Attitude' (Mean = 45.30), 'Perceived behavioural control' ( Mean = 42.20) and 'Subjective norm' ( Mean = 11.21).

Table 5 : Multiple regression analysis relating to intention

Factors	Intention	
		Sig
Constant	2.754	
Attitude towards behaviour (AB)	0.728	0.000
Perceived Behavioural Control (PBC)	0.094	0.005
Subjective Norm (SN)	-.018	0.792
R <sup>2</sup>	.489	
Adj R <sup>2</sup>	.476	
F value	37.018	
Significance	0.000	

$$\text{Intention} = 0.728 (\text{AB}) + 0.094 (\text{PBC}) - 0.018 (\text{SN}) + 2.754$$

From table 5, it can be seen that 48.9 % of variance in intention can be explained by the independent variable attitude towards behaviour, perceived behavioural control and subjective norm also the f value of 37.018 (P < .05) shows that the model is a god fit. Among the independent variable that predict the intention to join the institution, 72.8 % of variance could be explained by attitude towards behaviour followed by 9.4% of variance could be explained by perceived behavioural control. It can be seen that subjective norm does not have any impact of intention as it is insignificant. It is also clear that if any other independent variables are added to this model, then R2 would change marginally.

### Findings And Conclusion

The major findings emerged from the analysis of data is presented. Apart from the conclusion of this study, certain implication for future research is also discussed in the end.

### Findings

Demographic characteristics of the respondents shows that majority (56.7%) of the respondents are female. Regarding the age of the respondents, it is found that 86.7% of the respondents belong to the age group of 20-23 years. 42.5% of the respondents are from arts background, 28.3% of them are with engineering degree. As far as the family monthly income level of respondents, majority (70%) of them earn monthly income of less than Rs.50,000.

The data regarding 27 statements which was analyzed with the help of factor analysis and inter factor correlation analysis states that, the factor analysis brought out 3 factors in all explaining 46.841% of total variance. The extracted communalities range from .147 to .794. For defining the clarity of the factor loadings more than 0.300 were considered.

The first factor named as 'Attitude towards behaviour' are influenced by the attitude related factors in joining the institution. The second factor (i.e) 'Perceived behavioural control' factor highlights the fact that students tend to choose the institutions with lot of subjective factors. The third factor namely 'Subjective norm' includes the variables like compulsion from family members, friends, organization, teacher and others in choosing the institution for higher education. This factor stresses the presence of control factors in deciding the institution.

Two variables namely 'I join the institution to get a post-graduate degree' and 'I join the institution because most others join' did not load significantly on any factor. Hence they were excluded.

It can be interpreted that high positive correlation exist between Factor 1 and Factor 2 (i.e) Attitude towards behaviour and perceived behavioural control. It is also seen that there is positive correlation between Factor 2 and Factor 3 (i.e) Perceived behavioural control and Subjective norm. Whereas the relationship between the Factor 1 and Factor 3 is negative. (i.e) Attitude towards behaviour and Subjective norm.

It is also seen that mean scores indicate that the strongest factor as 'Attitude towards behaviour' (Mean = 45.30), 'Perceived behavioural control' ( Mean = 42.20) and 'Subjective norm' ( Mean = 11.21). It can be seen that 48.9 % of variance in intention can be explained by the independent variable attitude towards behavior, perceived behavioural control and subjective norm also the f value of 37.018 (P < .05) shows that the model is a god fit. Among the independent variable that predict the intention to join the institution, 72.8 % of variance could be explained by attitude towards behaviour followed by 9.4% of variance could be explained by perceived behavioural control. It can be seen that subjective norm does not have any impact of intention as it is insignificant. It is also clear that if any other independent variables are added to this model, then R2 would change marginally.

## Conclusion

Management education is gaining remarkable importance and it is now becoming purposefully global since it plays an important role in tomorrow's dynamic business environment. Rapid changes are taking place in the field of business as well as technology. No doubt the higher educational institutions need to reposition themselves in redesigning various management programs with a vision and redesign process to develop a structure that will enable it to function effectively focusing on current and emerging market. Globalization is speeding up by accelerating the pace and the rhythm at which firms must develop new technologies and produce and roll out new products and services on a global scale to stay competitive. So, the new management challenge gets in with managing team of experts from different culture to understand the customer's needs and satisfy them to maintain a long term relationship for the organisation survival.

## Limitations

As with all research, there were several limitations associated with this study. One such limitation was related to the sample used in the study. The data for this study was collected only from few higher educational institutions which offer management program. It is possible that students are attracted to these types of institutions differed in some important manner. If so, the results might have been skewed. Second, this was a quantitative study. It used a survey to collect data from the respondents. This type of data collection technique limited the nature of the responses given by the participants. Third, the data was collected from a sample that only included students from institutions in a

single geographic region. Fourth, the variables used in the study are drawn from the literature on student's intention to join an institution and Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB). However, the existence of other external factors cannot be ruled out.

Despite these limitations, the present study is important because it examined the factors that influence the students' intention to join the higher educational institutions. Acquiring this data would be beneficial to the staff at colleges who are responsible for developing effective marketing strategies to attract students.

## Scope For Future Research

This study only tested the applicability of TPB on the student's intentions to join the higher educational institutions in Coimbatore city. Therefore, one of the limitations for this study is that it does not take regional differences into account. However, we are aware that there might have been some difference from different regions due to the availability of information, traditional links with specific region and other factors. Further study may consider the regional disparity and it is an interesting pursuit to examine how different country images could influence the three components of TPB as well as the student's intention to join the higher educational institution.

The current study only looked into the first stage of the students' decision-making process and future study could have a further exploration of the other factors which influence the students, to join the institution. Further effort could be taken to measure the gap between the expectation and satisfaction level of students with regard to the institution they study.

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