

Students' Motivation and Add-on Course Selection: Evidence from Undergraduate Students in the Mumbai Region.

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doi.org/10.64643/IJIRTV13I5-209360-459

Abstract—Higher education institutions are being urged to offer supplementary courses that enhance regular academic programs due to the increasing emphasis on employability and skill development. These courses are designed to give students professional certifications, industry-relevant competences, and useful skills that improve their preparedness for the workforce. The goal of this study is to determine whether there is a substantial correlation between students' motivations and the kind of add-on course they choose. It also looks at the factors that influence students' enrollment in these courses. Using primary data gathered from 106 University of Mumbai undergraduate students via a structured questionnaire, a descriptive and analytical study approach was used. Convenience sampling was used, and the Pearson Chi-Square test and cross-tabulation were used for data analysis. The results showed that the main reasons for taking additional courses were certification, academic interest, job promotion, and skill development. Nevertheless, the Chi-Square analysis revealed no statistically significant correlation between the type of add-on course chosen and the students' motivations ($\chi^2 = 6.737$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.874$). Among various incentive groups, professional and certification-based courses were found to be the most popular category. The study comes to the conclusion that although students have a variety of reasons for taking extra courses, these reasons have little bearing on the type of course they choose. Higher education institutions, curriculum designers, and legislators can use the findings to create adaptable, learner-centered, industry-focused add-on programs that enhance graduate employability and promote lifelong learning.

Index Terms—Add-on courses, Career development, Employability, Higher education, Skill development

I. INTRODUCTION

Rapid technology breakthroughs, globalization, and changing labor market demands have caused a paradigm change in the modern higher education environment from knowledge-centric education to competency-based learning. In addition to imparting academic information, universities and other higher education institutions are under increasing pressure to produce graduates with professional competencies, employability skills, and the capacity for lifelong learning. Institutions have implemented a number of value-added initiatives in response to these shifting expectations, and add-on courses have become a crucial tool for improving students' academic and professional growth.

Add-on courses are extra programs that are offered in addition to standard degree programs in order to close the knowledge gap between academia and industry demands. These courses give students the chance to get professional certifications, digital competences, communication skills, entrepreneurial talents, technical expertise, and foreign language proficiency all of which may not be sufficiently addressed in traditional academic programs. As a result, enrollment in extracurricular courses is now a crucial component of students' educational experiences and employment readiness in all higher education institutions. In order to close this gap, the current study looks at how students' motivations affect their choice of supplementary courses. In particular, the study examines students' preferences for various add-on course categories, determines the main motivational factors influencing enrolment decisions, and determines whether there is a statistically significant correlation between course selection and motivational

dimensions. In addition to providing useful implications for curriculum designers, institutional administrators, and legislators in creating learner-centered and industry-relevant add-on programs, the findings are anticipated to add to the body of knowledge on educational decision-making and student motivation. This study adds to the larger conversation on higher education quality, skill development, and employability enhancement by offering empirical information on the factors influencing students' course choosing behavior. Additionally, the study provides insightful information for creating strategic interventions that might boost student involvement, enhance learning outcomes, and improve the fit between institutional offerings and labor market demands.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Brett D. Jones a, *, Kevin Krost a, Mia W. Jones b (2021), Their study's main goal was to determine how much students' impressions of the course and their cost beliefs influence their effort and grades in an online course. Students' impressions of the course influenced their effort, which in turn predicted their final grade. The results showed that students' assessments of the value of the course material, their level of interest, and the amount of time they had available for class activities all had an impact on their effort. Students' opinions of how easy the course was were taken into consideration. The results showed that students put up less effort when they thought the course was simple and they could succeed, and when they thought it would take a long time and the course was challenging. This study emphasizes the significance of creating courses that: (a) pique students' interest in the course activities; (b) cultivate a sense of concern between the instructor and students; (c) are at a suitable degree of difficulty; and (d) offer a manageable workload that takes time-constrained students into account. The results may be used by researchers to create interventions and tactics that teachers might employ to motivate students to work more in online courses.

Jinghang Cang Elective courses in universities are an essential part of the contemporary educational system since they help students develop holistic traits, expand their knowledge, and develop their critical thinking skills. These days, however, there is a tendency where students select elective classes in order to improve

their complete quality assessments and get more credits rather than because they are interested in or want to learn new things. In light of this, the Self-Determination Theory provides the foundation for this study. It draws attention to the important connection between behavioral performance and motivational styles.

Matthew Bailey, Dirk Ifenthaler, Maree Gosper, Mandy Kretzschmar, their study's main goal was to determine how much students' impressions of the course and their cost beliefs influence their effort and grades in an online course. Students' impressions of the course influenced their effort, which in turn predicted their final grade. The results showed that students' assessments of the value of the course material, their level of interest, and the amount of time they had available for class activities all had an impact on their effort. Students' opinions of how easy the course was being taken into consideration. The results showed that students put up less effort when they thought the course was simple and they could succeed, and when they thought it would take a long time and the course was challenging. This study emphasizes the significance of creating courses that: (a) pique students' interest in the course activities; (b) cultivate a sense of concern between the instructor and students; (c) are at a suitable degree of difficulty; and (d) offer a manageable workload that takes time-constrained students into account. The results may be used by researchers to create interventions and tactics that teachers might employ to motivate students to work more in online courses.

Kalokhe Anil Sopan¹, Dr. Kumbhar Vijaykumar Sambhajirao² (2025), According to the article, monitoring and comprehending students' learning motives and experiences will become more crucial as the demand for higher education rises and online delivery develops into open access, on-campus, and remote study options. Institutions that provide two or more study options should be aware of the factors that influence students' decisions. The significance of six factors personal, logistics, teaching and learning, learning support, environment, guidance, and marketing in affecting students' selection of three distinct study modalities is examined in this study. The results show that while there are notable variations in the significance of factors among students enrolled in various study modes, "teaching and learning" and "logistics" factors were the most significant when

averaged across all cohorts. High levels of transparency in the information given to students are said to be essential for institutions of higher learning.

Kim Mui Teo^{1*}, Sew Tiep Ho² (2024)

Add-on courses in higher education can close skill gaps and improve students' employability, according to research, but students frequently find it difficult to find courses that fit their backgrounds, interests, and career objectives. Add-on courses are essential for enhancing students' abilities and employability in higher education. However, choosing appropriate courses from a variety of possibilities might be challenging for students. In order to help students choose the right courses, this study suggests a recommendation system. The examination of students' preferences for course formats, delivery methods, and career goals forms the basis of the system's design, which offers insights for creating adaptable, pertinent, and student-focused programs. Overall, this research indicates that in order to satisfy student expectations, academic institutions should create adaptable and industry-aligned add-on programs.

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which analyzes the motivating processes behind people's educational decisions, serves as the main foundation for this study. SDT divides motivation into two categories: extrinsic motivation, which is motivated by incentives from outside sources like social recognition, certification, or job progress, and intrinsic motivation, which is motivated by personal interest and fulfilment. When it comes to add-on courses, students could sign up because they truly want to learn new things or because they anticipate concrete advantages like increased employability, better academic performance, or professional certification. Consequently, SDT offers a suitable theoretical framework for investigating how various motivational orientations affect students' choice of supplemental courses.

Expectancy-Value Theory (Eccles et al.), which contends that students' educational choices are influenced by their expectations of success and the perceived worth of the learning activity, provides additional support for the study. Add-on courses that offer significant academic, professional, or personal

benefits and that students feel they can successfully complete are more likely to be selected. Enrolment selections are heavily influenced by a course's perceived value, importance, interest, and potential professional relevance. The finding is further supported by the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), which explains how attitudes toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control all influence behavioral intentions. Therefore, endorsements from classmates and teachers, institutional support, the availability of time and money, and personal motivation may all have an impact on students' decisions to enroll in supplemental courses.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the major motives for enrolling in add-on courses.
2. To classify the types of add-on courses chosen by students.
3. To analyze the relationship between students' motives and the type of add-on course selected.

V. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What are the primary motives for enrolling in add-on courses?
- What types of add-on courses are most preferred by students?
- Is there a significant relationship between motive and course selection?

VI. HYPOTHESIS

H0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between students' motives and the type of add-on course selected.

H1 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant relationship between students' motives and the type of add-on course selected.

VII. VARIABLES

Independent Variable: Motive for enrolling (e.g., career advancement, skill development, interest, certification)

Dependent Variable: Type of add-on course (e.g., technical, management, creative, language, certification-based)

VIII. METHODOLOGY

- Research Design: Descriptive and analytical
- Data Collection:
 - Primary data through structured questionnaire
 - Secondary data from journals, reports, etc.
- Sampling Method: Convenience sampling
- Sample Size: 106
- Statistical Tools:
 - Cross-tabulation
 - Chi-square test (to test relationship)

IX. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The current study looks into how students' motivations affect their choice of supplemental courses when they are enrolled in college.

Higher education institutions, curriculum developers, academic administrators, legislators, and faculty members are anticipated to gain from the study's findings, which offer empirical data on the variables impacting students' choice of supplemental courses.

The study may help organizations create learner-centered, industry-focused, skill-based supplemental programs that meet the needs of the labor market and students' goals.

To improve the generalizability of the results, future research may include students from universities in various locations, raise the sample size, and broaden the geographic coverage.

X. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Only students from universities connected to the University of Mumbai are included in the study. As a result, students from other universities or areas with distinct academic contexts and institutional processes might not be able to apply the findings.

106 undergraduate and graduate students' comments served as the basis for the study. A larger sample could increase the representativeness and reliability of the results, even though the sample offers insightful information on why students choose add-on courses.

The study uses a quantitative approach, which yields quantifiable proof of correlations between variables but leaves out contextual explanations or in-depth personal experiences that could be gleaned through qualitative techniques like focus groups or interviews.

XI. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

Contingency table with coding

Type of Add-on Course	Career Advancement (1)	Skill Development (2)	Academic Interest (3)	Certification (4)	Other (5)	Total
1 – Professional/Certification Courses	29	13	4	1	2	49
2 – Technical/IT Courses	21	10	3	3	0	37
3 – Language & Communication Courses	6	2	1	1	0	10
4 – Soft Skills/Personality Development	6	4	0	0	0	10
Total	62	29	8	5	2	106

Test	Value	df	Sig. (p-value)
Pearson Chi-Square	6.737	12	0.874
Likelihood Ratio	7.118	12	0.85
Linear-by-Linear Association	0.003	1	0.956
N of Valid Cases	106		

Interpretation

The association between students' reasons for enrolling in add-on courses and the kind of add-on course they choose was investigated using the Pearson Chi-Square test of independence. With 12 degrees of freedom, the analysis produced a Pearson Chi-Square value of 6.737 and a p-value of 0.874. The null hypothesis was not rejected since the p-value is greater than the traditional level of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$).

Students stated a variety of reasons, including certification, job progression, skill development, and academic interest, but these reasons had no bearing on the type of add-on course they chose. Students with varying motivational backgrounds seem to select comparable kinds of supplemental courses.

Professional/Certification Courses were the most popular category across nearly all motives, according

to the contingency table, especially among students driven by skill improvement and professional progression. These frequency variations weren't statistically significant, though.

XII. CONCLUSION

According to the Chi-Square analysis, there is no statistically significant correlation between the type of add-on course chosen and the reasons why students enroll in them ($\chi^2 = 6.737$, $df = 12$, $p = 0.874$).

This implies that students typically select comparable kinds of supplemental courses regardless of whether they are driven by job growth, skill development, academic interest, certification, or other factors. The widespread attraction of professional/certification courses across various motivating groups suggests that students, regardless of their primary motivation, find these courses to be advantageous.

XIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Keep providing a variety of supplementary courses. Bolster courses that are professional and certification-based.

Raising awareness of course categories with low enrollment combine several learning objectives.

Survey students frequently for their opinions & work together with business partners to create the courses.

To ascertain whether these results hold true in various educational contexts, future research should incorporate a bigger sample size and students from several universities or geographical areas.

According to this research, students' propensity to learn online has increased since the COVID-19 pandemic, and online education has grown in popularity, especially in higher education. The purpose of this study was to determine what encourages students to learn online and if they plan to continue attending online courses. Most students also planned to continue their education online in the future. The best motivators were determined to be extrinsic rewards like performance enhancement. This study article suggests that universities should think about modifying the curriculum to enhance student learning while taking into account the flexibility of the time and effort that students should put in to create a meaningful online learning experience.

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