
**PERCEPTION AND SATISFACTION OF COMMERCE STUDENTS
TOWARDS INDUSTRY-INTEGRATED EDUCATION IN HIGHER
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
COIMBATORE CITY**

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ABSTRACT

The study, titled "Perception and Satisfaction of Commerce Students towards Industry-Integrated Education in Higher Educational Institutions with Special Reference to Coimbatore City," focuses on understanding how commerce students view and feel about industry-integrated education. It is a descriptive study that makes use of both primary and secondary data sources. For the primary data, 120 commerce students from Coimbatore City were surveyed using a structured questionnaire, and the sample was selected through convenience sampling. The results of the study show that students have a favourable opinion about industry-integrated education, as they believe it helps in gaining practical knowledge, developing employability skills, and preparing them better for their future careers. The study also recommends that there should be more emphasis on providing practical exposure and fostering stronger partnerships with industries to further enhance the quality of commerce education.

INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced and highly competitive business world, higher education institutions are placing greater emphasis on integrating industry practices into their teaching methods. The goal is to connect what students learn in the classroom with the real-world demands of the workforce. Many experts believe that traditional teaching methods, which mainly focus on

lectures and textbooks, are not enough to prepare students for the challenges they will face in their careers. As a result, educators are increasingly adopting hands-on learning approaches to ensure that students gain the necessary skills, knowledge, and abilities that employers look for.

Commerce education is especially important as it prepares students for careers in areas like accounting, finance, banking, taxation, marketing, and business management. However, the business world is constantly changing due to new technologies, global markets, and evolving customer needs. This has made it essential for commerce students to not only understand theoretical concepts but also develop practical and professional skills that can be applied in real-life situations. Integrating industry practices into education helps students gain valuable experience, improve their decision-making abilities, build technical expertise, and increase their chances of finding good employment. How students perceive and feel about these industry-focused educational programs is a key factor in determining their effectiveness.

When students have a positive attitude and are satisfied with the learning experiences they receive, it leads to better academic performance, stronger skill development, and higher confidence levels. Conversely, if students feel that they are not receiving enough industry exposure or practical training, it can weaken the overall impact of their education. With this in mind, the current study focuses on examining how commerce students in Coimbatore City view and feel about industry-integrated education.

The research aims to understand their opinions, experiences, and expectations regarding practical and industry-oriented learning opportunities provided by higher educational institutions. This investigation will help in evaluating the effectiveness of such programs and provide insights that can guide future improvements in commerce education.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To examine the perception of commerce students towards industry-integrated education in higher educational institutions.
- To analyse the satisfaction level of commerce students regarding industry-integrated educational practices.
- To identify the impact of industry-integrated education on students' employability skills and career readiness.
- To examine the effectiveness of practical exposure such as internships, industrial visits, certification courses, and guest lectures.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In today's fast-paced and highly competitive world, commerce students need not only a strong foundation in theory but also hands-on experience and skills that are relevant to the real world of business. While universities and colleges strive to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry needs by offering various programs such as internships, industrial visits, certification courses, and workshops, there is still a lack of clear understanding regarding how students perceive these opportunities and whether they feel satisfied with the experiences provided. As a result, this study seeks to explore and analyse the views and level of satisfaction of commerce students towards industry-integrated education offered by higher educational institutions, with a specific focus on the city of Coimbatore.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The current research is centred on understanding how commerce students perceive and are satisfied with industry-integrated education in higher education institutions located in Coimbatore City. The study looks into various elements such as hands-on learning experiences, internship opportunities, visits to industries, participation in certification courses, and sessions with industry experts through guest lectures, and programs aimed at developing specific skills. The main goal is to gather students' views on how effective industry-focused education is in building employability skills and preparing them for their future careers. The research involves a sample of 120 commerce students and offers valuable information that can help educational institutions enhance their collaboration with industries and improve the overall academic experience.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology is the organized and structured approach that researchers use to gather, examine, and make sense of information in order to meet the goals of their study. It outlines the overall plan or framework for conducting the research and deciding on the tools or techniques that will be used to process and understand the collected information.

➤ **Research Design:** The current study is of a descriptive nature, meaning it is primarily focused on understanding and describing the perceptions and levels of satisfaction among commerce students regarding the implementation of industry-integrated education in higher educational institutions. The goal is to gather insights and present a clear picture of how these students feel about the integration of industry practices into their academic curriculum.

➤ **Sampling Method:** For the purpose of this study, the Convenience Sampling Method has been employed. This method involves selecting respondents based on their ease of access and availability, which makes it a practical choice for this research. The selection process ensures that participants are readily available and willing to take part in the study.

➤ **Sampling Size:** The study encompasses a total of 120 commerce students who are currently pursuing their education in higher educational institutions located in Coimbatore City. The selected sample size is appropriate for obtaining a representative view of the broader student population in this area.

➤ **Source of Data:** The study makes use of both Primary and Secondary Data. Primary data were gathered through a structured questionnaire that was administered directly to the commerce students. This method allows for direct feedback from the participants. On the other hand, Secondary data were sourced from various academic and informational materials such as books, journals, websites, articles, and previous research studies related to the topic of industry-integrated education. This mix of data sources provides a comprehensive foundation for the analysis.

➤ Statistical/Analytical Tools Used

- Percentage Analysis
- Chi-Square Test
- Weighted Average
- ANOVA

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

➤ The study was done only on commerce students from higher education institutions in Coimbatore City.

➤ The number of people included in the study is 120, which might not show the whole picture of all students.

➤ The research used information gathered directly from a questionnaire, and the answers depend on personal views.

➤ The results are based on a specific time period and might be different if studied at another time.

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

TABLE NO: 1

Percentage Analysis

S.No	Gender	(%)	S.No	Age	(%)	S.No	Programme	(%)
1	Male	57	1	Below 18 Years	8.3	1	B.Com	31.7
2	Female	43	2	18–20 Years	38.3	2	B.Com CA	21.7
Total		100	3	21–23 Years	28.3	3	B.Com PA	18.3
S.No	Options	(%)	4	24–26 Years	15	4	M.Com	15
1	First Year	23.3	5	Above 26 Years	10	5	Other	13.3
2	Second Year	21.7	Total		100	Total		100
3	Third Year	28.3	S.No	Institution Type	(%)	S.No	Practical Knowledge	(%)
4	Final Year / PG	16.7	1	Government	15	1	Strongly Disagree	4.2
5	Other	10	2	Aided	18.3	2	Disagree	6.7
Total		100	3	Private	30	3	Neutral	15
S.No	Skills	(%)	4	Autonomous	23.3	4	Agree	39.1
1	Strongly Disagree	3.3	5	Deemed University	13.4	5	Strongly Agree	35
2	Disagree	8.3	Total		100	Total		100
3	Neutral	16.7	S.No	Internship	(%)	S.No	Industry Awareness	(%)
4	Agree	37.5	1	Strongly Disagree	5	1	Strongly Disagree	4.2
5	Strongly Agree	34.2	2	Disagree	7.5	2	Disagree	7.5
Total		100	3	Neutral	18.3	3	Neutral	15.8
S.No	Guest Lectures	(%)	4	Agree	36.7	4	Agree	38.3
1	Strongly Disagree	3.3	5	Strongly Agree	32.5	5	Strongly Agree	34.2
2	Disagree	6.7	Total		100	Total		100
3	Neutral	16.7	S.No	Certification Courses	(%)	S.No	Theory-Practice Gap	(%)
4	Agree	40	1	Strongly Disagree	5	1	Strongly Disagree	4.2
5	Strongly Agree	33.3	2	Disagree	8.3	2	Disagree	5.8
Total		100	3	Neutral	15	3	Neutral	16.7
S.No	Decision Making	(%)	4	Agree	35.9	4	Agree	38.3
1	Strongly Disagree	3.3	5	Strongly Agree	35.8	5	Strongly Agree	35
2	Disagree	7.5	Total		100	Total		100
3	Neutral	17.5	S.No	Practical Training	(%)	S.No	Career Readiness	(%)
4	Agree	37.5	1	Strongly Disagree	2.5	1	Strongly Disagree	4.2
5	Strongly Agree	34.2	2	Disagree	5.8	2	Disagree	6.7
Total		100	3	Neutral	12.5	3	Neutral	15.8
S.No	Internship	(%)	4	Agree	36.7	4	Agree	36.7
1	Strongly Disagree	6.7	5	Strongly Agree	42.5	5	Strongly Agree	36.6
2	Disagree	10	Total		100	Total		100
3	Neutral	20	S.No	Industrial Visits Satisfactio	(%)	S.No	Certification Satisfaction	(%)
4	Agree	35	1	Strongly Disagree	5	1	Strongly Disagree	5.8
5	Strongly Agree	28.3	2	Disagree	8.3	2	Disagree	7.5

Total		100	3	Neutral		18.3	3	Neutral		17.5
S.No	Encouragement	(%)	4	Agree		37.5	4	Agree		38.3
1	Strongly Disagree	4.2	5	Strongly Agree		30.9	5	Strongly Agree		30.9
2	Disagree	6.7	Total			100	Total			100
3	Neutral	19.1	S.No	Workshops		(%)	S.No	Industry Exposure		(%)
4	Agree	39.2	1	Strongly Disagree		3.3	1	Strongly Disagree		7.5
5	Strongly Agree	30.8	2	Disagree		7.5	2	Disagree		10.8
Total		100	3	Neutral		16.7	3	Neutral		21.7
S.No	Job Ready	(%)	4	Agree		40	4	Agree		33.3
1	Strongly Disagree	4.2	5	Strongly Agree		32.5	5	Strongly Agree		26.7
2	Disagree	6.7	Total			100	Total			100
3	Neutral	15	S.No	Placement		(%)	S.No	Industry Practices		(%)
4	Agree	39.1	1	Strongly Disagree		8.3	1	Strongly Disagree		5
5	Strongly Agree	35	2	Disagree		11.7	2	Disagree		8.3
Total		100	3	Neutral		20.8	3	Neutral		18.3
S.No	Satisfaction	(%)	4	Agree		32.5	4	Agree		37.5
1	Strongly Disagree	4.2	5	Strongly Agree		26.7	5	Strongly Agree		30.9
2	Disagree	7.5	Total			100	Total			100
3	Neutral	16.7								
4	Agree	38.3								
5	Strongly Agree	33.3								
Total		100								

(Source: Primary Data)

CHI-SQUARE TEST

Relationship between type of institution and overall satisfaction towards industry-integrated education.

Hypotheses:

- **H₀:** There is no significant relationship between type of institution and overall satisfaction towards industry-integrated education.
- **H₁:** There is a significant relationship between type of institution and overall satisfaction towards industry-integrated education.

TABLE NO: 2

Chi square Table.

Type of Institution	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Row Totals
Government	2 (0.75) [2.08]	3 (1.35) [2.02]	4 (3.00) [0.33]	5 (6.90) [0.52]	4 (6.00) [0.67]	18
Aided	1 (0.92)	2 (1.65)	5 (3.67)	8 (8.43)	6 (7.33)	22

	[0.01]	[0.07]	[0.48]	[0.02]	[0.24]	
Private	1 (1.50) [0.17]	2 (2.70) [0.18]	5 (6.00) [0.17]	15 (13.80) [0.10]	13 (12.00) [0.08]	36
Autonomous	1 (1.17) [0.02]	1 (2.10) [0.58]	4 (4.67) [0.10]	12 (10.73) [0.15]	10 (9.33) [0.05]	28
Deemed University	0 (0.67) [0.67]	1 (1.20) [0.03]	2 (2.67) [0.17]	6 (6.13) [0.00]	7 (5.33) [0.52]	16
Column Totals	5	9	20	46	40	120

(Source: Primary Data)

Calculated Chi-Square Value = **9.44**, Degrees of Freedom = **16**, Table Value (5% level) = **26.296**

Interpretation: Since the calculated chi-square value (9.44) is less than the table value (26.296), the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. Hence, there is no significant relationship between type of institution and overall satisfaction towards industry-integrated education among commerce students.

WEIGHTED AVERAGE METHOD

The Weighted Average Method is used to identify the level of perception and satisfaction of respondents based on the Likert scale responses (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree).

Option	Weight
Strongly Disagree	1
Disagree	2
Neutral	3
Agree	4
Strongly Agree	5

TABLE NO: 3: Overall Satisfaction with Industry-Integrated Education.

Option	No. of Respondents	Weight	Weighted Score
Strongly Disagree	5	1	5
Disagree	9	2	18
Neutral	20	3	60
Agree	46	4	184
Strongly Agree	40	5	200
Total	120		467

(Source: Primary Data)

Weighted Average Score = 3.89

Since the weighted average score is 3.89, it indicates that respondents have a high level of satisfaction towards industry-integrated education.

ONE-WAY ANOVA TEST

To test whether there is a significant difference between the type of institution and satisfaction towards industry-integrated education among commerce students.

Hypotheses

- **H₀:** There is no significant difference between the type of institution and satisfaction towards industry-integrated education.
- **H₁:** There is a significant difference between the type of institution and satisfaction towards industry-integrated education.

TABLE NO: 4

ANOVA Table.

Particulars	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F Value	Sig.
Between Groups	8.742	4	2.186	2.417	0.052
Within Groups	103.998	115	0.904		
Total	112.740	119			

Interpretation: Since the significance value (0.052) is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is no significant difference between the type of institution and satisfaction towards industry-integrated education among commerce students.

FINDINGS

- Majority of respondents (57%) were male, while 43% were female.
- Most respondents (38.3%) belonged to the 18–20 years age group, followed by 28.3% in the 21–23 years category.
- Majority of respondents (31.7%) were pursuing B.Com, followed by 21.7% in B.Com CA.
- Most respondents (28.3%) were third-year students, followed by 23.3% in the first year.
- Majority of respondents (30%) studied in private institutions, followed by 23.3% in autonomous institutions.
- Majority (39.1%) agreed and 35% strongly agreed that industry-integrated education improves practical knowledge.
- Most respondents (37.5%) agreed that an industry-oriented curriculum enhances employability skills, while 34.2% strongly agreed.

- Majority (36.7%) agreed that internship opportunities help in understanding real work environments, followed by 32.5% strongly agreeing.
- Most respondents (38.3%) agreed that industrial visits improve industry awareness, while 34.2% strongly agreed.
- Majority (40%) agreed that guest lectures by industry experts are useful for career development, followed by 33.3% strongly agreeing.
- Most respondents (35.9%) agreed and 35.8% strongly agreed that certification courses improve professional competency.
- Majority (38.3%) agreed that industry-integrated education bridges the gap between theory and practice, followed by 35% strongly agreeing.
- Most respondents (37.5%) agreed that practical exposure improves decision-making skills, while 34.2% strongly agreed.
- Majority (42.5%) strongly agreed that the commerce curriculum should include more practical training, followed by 36.7% agreeing.
- Most respondents (36.7%) agreed and 36.6% strongly agreed that industry-integrated education increases confidence in career readiness.
- Majority (35%) agreed that they were satisfied with internship opportunities, while 28.3% strongly agreed.
- Most respondents (37.5%) agreed that they were satisfied with industrial visits organized by institutions, followed by 30.9% strongly agreeing.
- Majority (38.3%) agreed that they were satisfied with skill-based certification programmes, while 30.9% strongly agreed.
- Most respondents (39.2%) agreed that faculty members encourage practical and industry-oriented learning, followed by 30.8% strongly agreeing.
- Majority (40%) agreed that workshops and seminars improve industry knowledge, while 32.5% strongly agreed.
- Most respondents (33.3%) agreed that their institution provides sufficient industry exposure, followed by 26.7% strongly agreeing.
- Majority (39.1%) agreed that industry-integrated education helps them become job-ready, while 35% strongly agreed.
- Most respondents (32.5%) agreed that they were satisfied with placement-related training, followed by 26.7% strongly agreeing.
- Majority (37.5%) agreed that their institution effectively integrates industry practices into learning, while 30.9% strongly agreed.

- Most respondents (38.3%) agreed and 33.3% strongly agreed that they were overall satisfied with industry-integrated education.
- **Chi-Square Test:** The calculated value (9.44) is less than the table value (26.296), the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted. Hence, there is no significant relationship between type of institution and overall satisfaction towards industry-integrated education among commerce students.
- **Weighted Average:** Since the weighted average score is 3.89, it indicates that respondents have a high level of satisfaction towards industry-integrated education.
- **ANOVA:** the significance value (0.052) is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected

SUGGESTIONS

Higher educational institutions should take active steps to strengthen the connection between academia and industry by forming partnerships with companies, financial institutions, and various business organizations. These collaborations can offer students valuable hands-on experiences through internships, live projects, industrial visits, and opportunities to interact with industry experts. Such efforts will enable commerce students to gain a deeper understanding of real-world scenarios and become more aware of the expectations that industries have from professionals.

Institutions should focus on introducing a wider range of skill-based and industry-focused certification programs. Examples include Tally, SAP, GST, Financial Modelling, Banking, Digital Marketing, and Business Analytics. These certifications not only help students develop practical skills but also enhance their professional competencies, making them more competitive in the job market and increasing their chances of securing employment.

The commerce curriculum needs to be updated on a regular basis to place more emphasis on practical learning rather than purely theoretical instruction. Teaching methods should include case studies, simulations, problem-solving exercises, project-based learning, and practical assignments. Integrating these into classroom teaching would help students better understand how theory applies in real-life situations and bridge the gap between academic learning and professional practice. Higher educational institutions should also organize frequent workshops, guest lectures, seminars, and career guidance sessions featuring industry professionals. These activities can raise students' awareness about the latest trends, emerging career opportunities, and the expectations that exist in the commerce and business sectors.

This exposure is crucial for shaping students' career paths and aligning their goals with industry requirements.

Finally, educational institutions should ensure that all commerce students, regardless of their program or the type of institution they are attending, have equal access to industry exposure opportunities. By focusing on practical learning and career-oriented education, institutions can significantly improve student satisfaction and overall career preparedness, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in their professional lives.

CONCLUSION

The current research finds that students studying commerce have a favourable view and a generally good opinion about education that is connected with industries within higher education institutions in Coimbatore City. The results show that various activities such as internships, visits to industries, certificate programs, workshops, talks by industry professionals, and training for placements are very helpful in improving students' understanding of real-world situations, their ability to get jobs, and their readiness for careers. The students think that learning that is focused on industry needs helps connect what they learn in the classroom with what they actually do in the workplace.

Even though there are many positive aspects, the study also points out that more exposure to industries, better placement training, and more hands-on learning experiences are needed to match the expectations of the job market. Because of this, educational institutions should work more closely with industries and use teaching methods that are more focused on skills and practical knowledge to boost student satisfaction and their professional abilities. Overall, education that is integrated with industry plays a key role in helping commerce students prepare for future job opportunities and face the challenges they might meet in their professional lives.

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