

Gender Differences: Effects On Job Opportunities And Preferences

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0.ABSTRACT

In this study conducted at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, we investigate the impact of gender differences on job opportunities and preferences. Our research delves into the perceptions of gender-related disparities among students and its consequences on their career choices. By employing a quantitative research approach, we collect data from a diverse group of undergraduate students at IIT Kanpur. Firstly, we analyse the students' perceptions of gender differences in job opportunities and preferences. Additionally, we explore the factors that influence their career choices. The determinants covered were batch, place of stay, hometown, religion, category, Population index of your caste in the region you live, education city, education type, parents education, family structure, role models, economic conditions, social life, family closeness/openness, preparing sector, extracurricular activities, hostel environment, branch and additional study beyond your branch. This study aims to shed light on the intricate dynamics of gender-related issues in providing valuable insights for educational institutions and policymakers.

A five-point Likert scale was used as the research instrument, which was administered to 34 respondents to measure their attitude and behaviour.

I.INTRODUCTION

India's impact on the global economy has grown significantly following the liberalisation and globalisation of its economic policies. World Bank (2011) has reported that by the year 2025, developing economies like India, Brazil, Russia and China will be major contributors to the global growth. Globalisation has increased market volatility and competitive pressures due to which the workforce is undergoing radical changes. In contemporary times, women play a substantial role in the Indian workforce, particularly within the software industry (Valk and Srinivasan, 2011). According to the 2008 NASSCOM report, the IT-BPO sector has emerged as a favoured career option for highly qualified women professionals.

In Indian culture, a prominent aspect of a woman's identity is her dedication to family responsibilities. The proportion of employed women over 30 years old is relatively lower, primarily

because many female software professionals are at a stage in life where they are getting married and starting families. This transition can make it challenging for them to manage both their career and household duties. In a rapidly evolving society like India, where women are traditionally expected to be homemakers and caregivers, achieving a harmonious work-life balance presents a significant challenge. The struggle to balance work and family life is a common issue faced by women working in the IT field, which can impede their long-term commitment to their careers.

II. Literature Review

Industry view

Gender is a construct that arises from societal practices, serving to signify the social distinctions between individuals based on their identification as men or women. As per Acker's (1990) theory of gendered organisations, men typically assume positions of authority within organisations due to their predominance in primary roles and their prevalence in top leadership positions. Organizations are in sought of the “ideal worker” who does not have responsibilities to family caregiving and is able to devote one’s time and energy entirely to work. In the field of organisational behaviour, scholarly work also suggests that women who excel in roles traditionally associated with men tend to be perceived as more deserving of rewards and acknowledgment.

Organisations often place a higher value on specific characteristics in men, including critical thinking, consistency, assertiveness, and a strong commitment to their paid work. These attributes are considered crucial for long-term profitability and the overall success of the organisation (Banihani, Lewis, and Syed, 2013: 411). Unlike men, women employees cannot work for long hours due to their domestic responsibilities (Ibid); men are considered to be more committed and hence more suitable for promotion by the employers.

One of the factors contributing to the underrepresentation of women in senior positions is their limited access to both formal and informal interactions (Kanter, 1977, as cited in Banihani, Lewis, and Syed, 2013). As a result, women tend to have less influence during interactions and occupy lower levels of authority and status within the organisation. Consequently, they have fewer chances than men to experience psychological fulfilment (ibid., p. 415). In most of the organisation's research and theory, a male perspective is usually adopted (Ibid).

Individual view

Differentiation of gender roles are greatly influenced by culture, which has direct implications on opportunities and preferences. Some people are afraid of the social discrimination they might experience which would negatively affect their work experience. So they forbade from applying to these sectors. Such a perception of gender discrimination has more negative implications on the work experience and attitudes of women than men (Sia, Sahoo and Duari, (2015): 61). Women encountered more work conflict, reduced self-esteem, increased levels of anxiety and depression, and perceived lower status of the job.

III. Research Design

Research Question And Objectives

The central research inquiry for this study is as follows: "Are individuals' preferences influenced by shared factors, and are their opportunities affected by discrimination based on caste and gender?" To address this question, the study has formulated the following objectives:

1. Evaluate the perception of gender discrimination among female employees in various sectors, including Analyst, IT, Core, Finance, and Consultancy.
2. Identify the principal factors that influence sector preference.
3. Examine the influence of demographic variables on the primary drivers of job opportunities.
4. Investigate the impact of demographic variables on the key determinants.

IV. Research Methodology and Data

Nature Of Study, Universe Of Study And Population

The sample consists of students of three batches graduated/to graduate in 2023/2024/2025 of Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur between 31 October and 3 November 2023. A total of 29 questions were asked, including 5 Likert-style rating questions. The questionnaire is provided here-

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1mvrpjMCd1dl4Ms7VR87lcLNNBCUtcvu3IDu8JIjuBCc/edit>

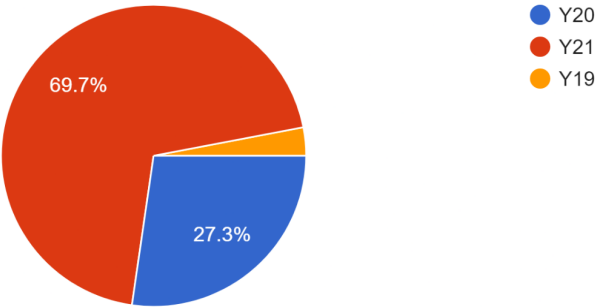
Sampling

A set of 34 students belonging to multiple varieties is taken. The responses are taken unwatched via google surveys. In addition to this a set of 4 responders have also given in-depth interviews with consent form undersigned. Sampling used for in depth interviews is convenience sampling.

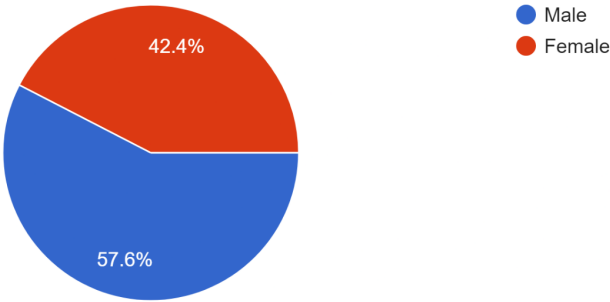
Plan Of Analysis

All the data is compiled here to be looked for any possible evidence-

Batch
33 responses

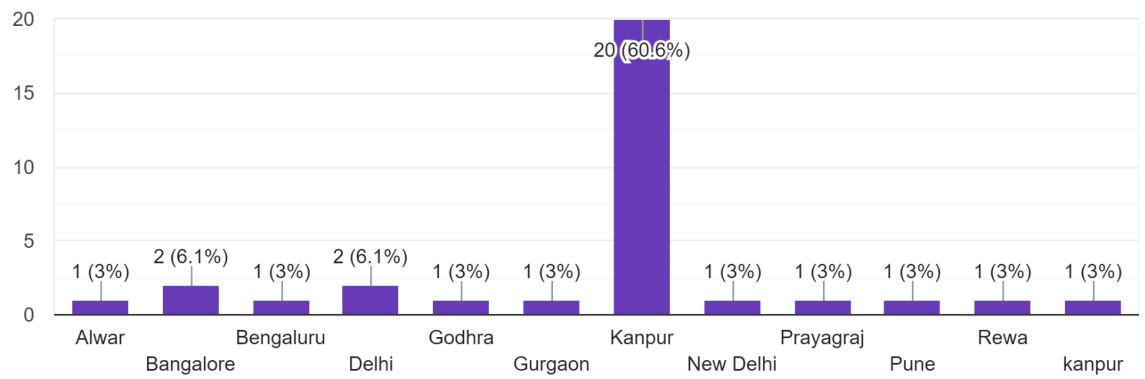


Gender
33 responses



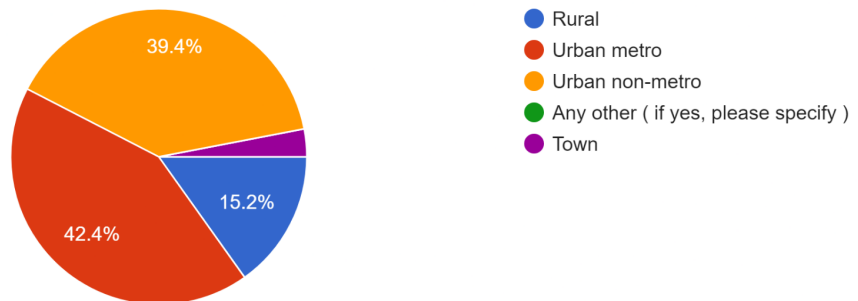
City(currently you live in)

33 responses



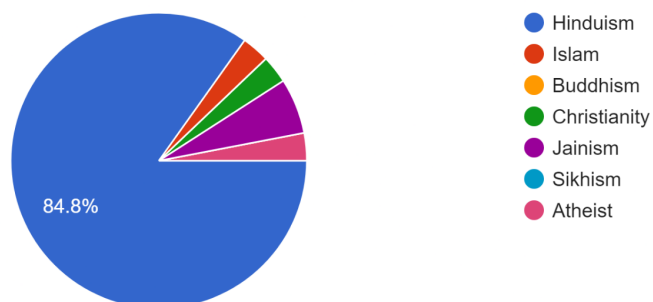
Home Town(where you belong to)

33 responses

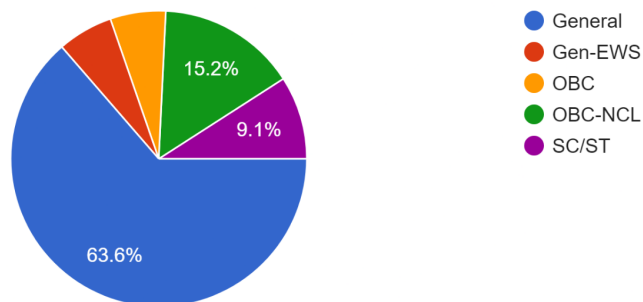


Religion you follow

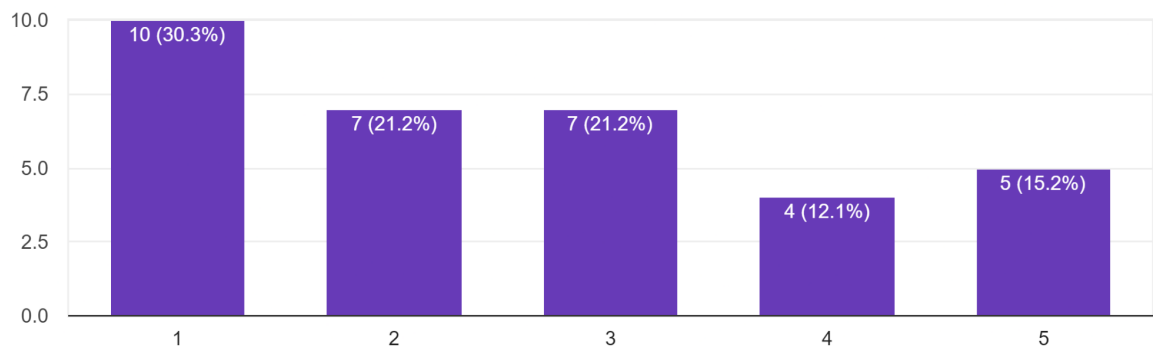
33 responses



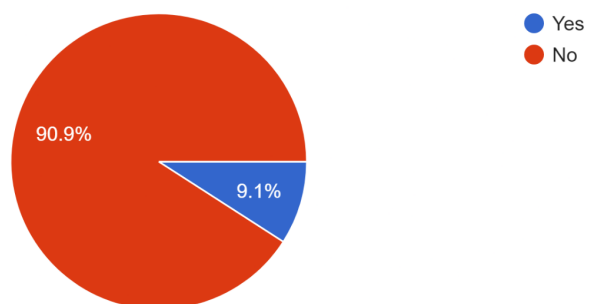
Category you belong to
33 responses



Population of your caste in the region you live
33 responses

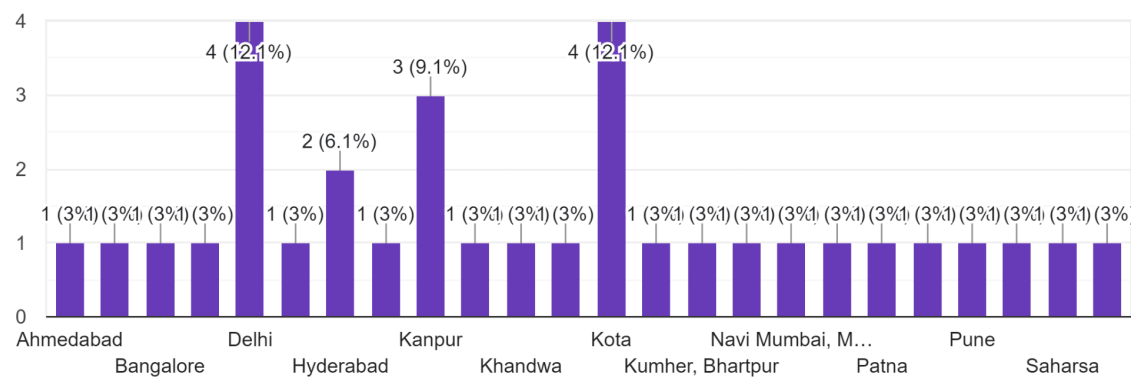


Have you faced religion/caste/category based discrimination in the campus/where you live/anywhere else? Please mention where and how if yes
33 responses



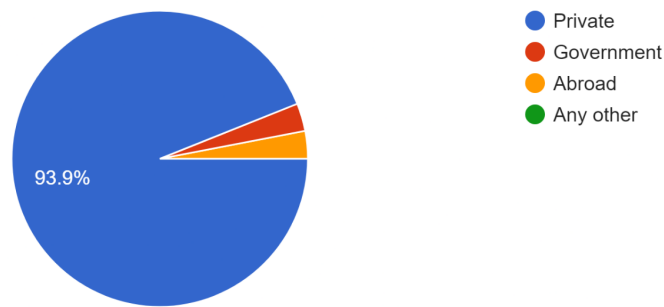
Education City(where you completed your class 10th and 12th)

33 responses



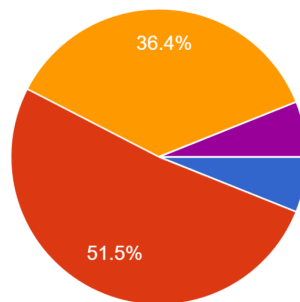
Type of school education

33 responses



Father's Education

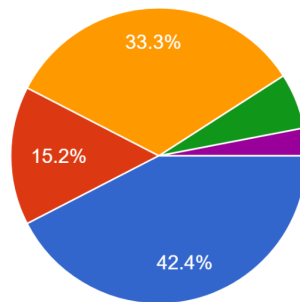
33 responses



- Till class 12th and working/job/business
- Done Graduation and then job/business/working
- Graduation+higher studies and job/business/working
- No education but working/business
- Class below 12th and working/business
- Not working
- Single mother child
- Any other, if yes, please mention

Any sibling

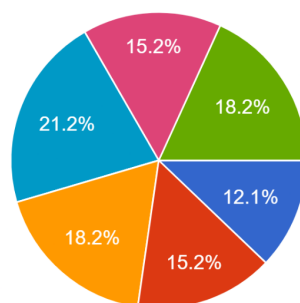
33 responses



- Yes (if yes , please mention numbers in the space provided below)
- No
- 1
- 2
- 3

Mother's Education

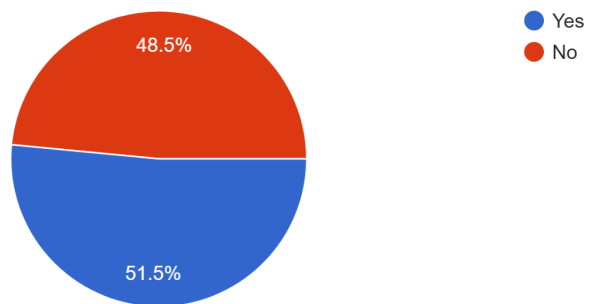
33 responses



- Till class 12th and working/job/business
- Done Graduation and then job/business/working
- Graduation+higher studies and job/business/working
- No education but working/business
- Class below 12th and working/business
- Not working but received proper education
- Not working but received proper education
- Any other, if yes, please mention

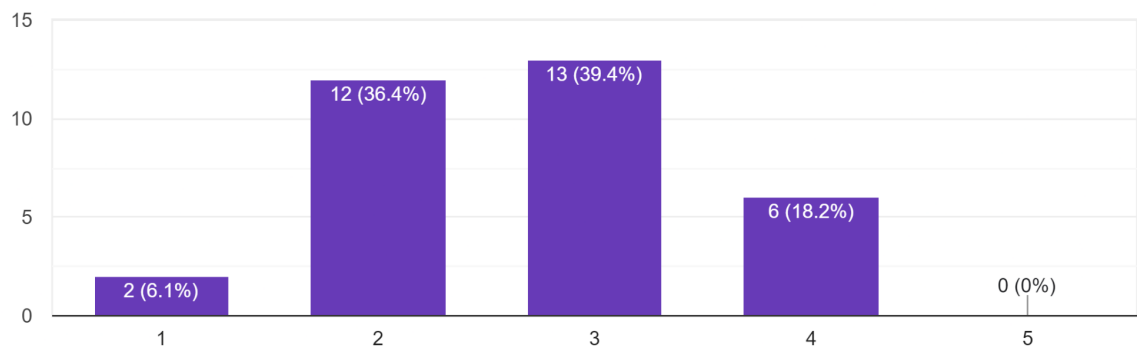
Any Rolemodels (in your home/ neighbours)

33 responses



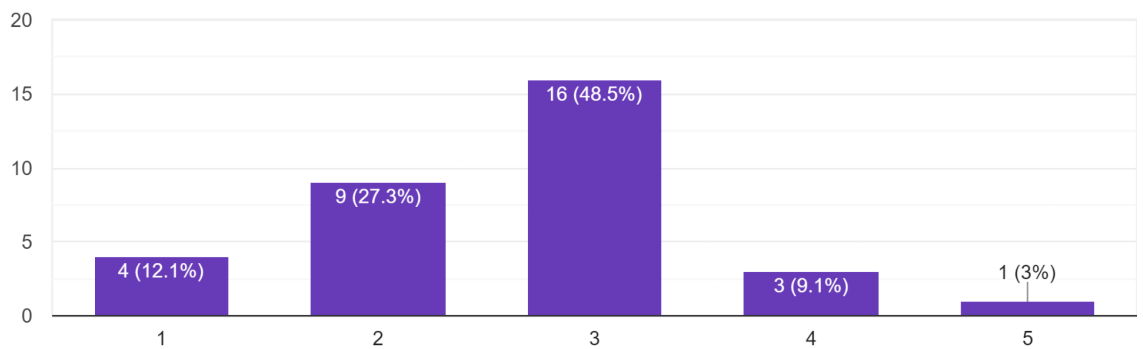
How is your economic status currently?(Rate from 1 to 5)

33 responses



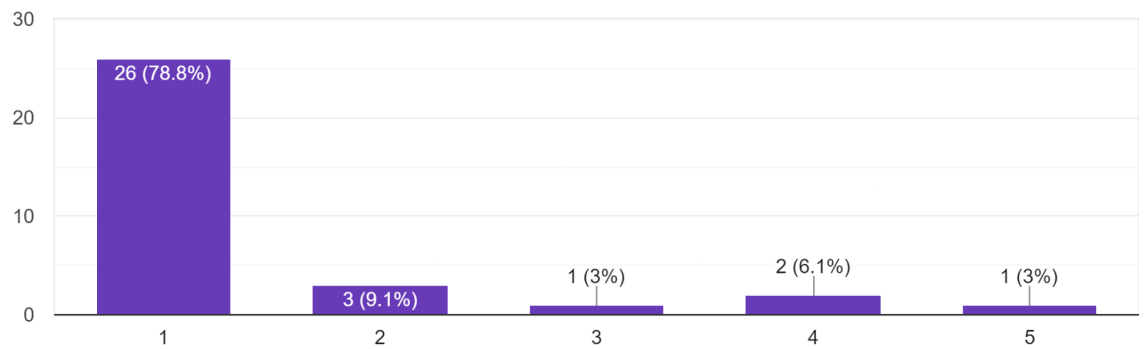
How is your social life currently?(Rate from 1 to 5)

33 responses



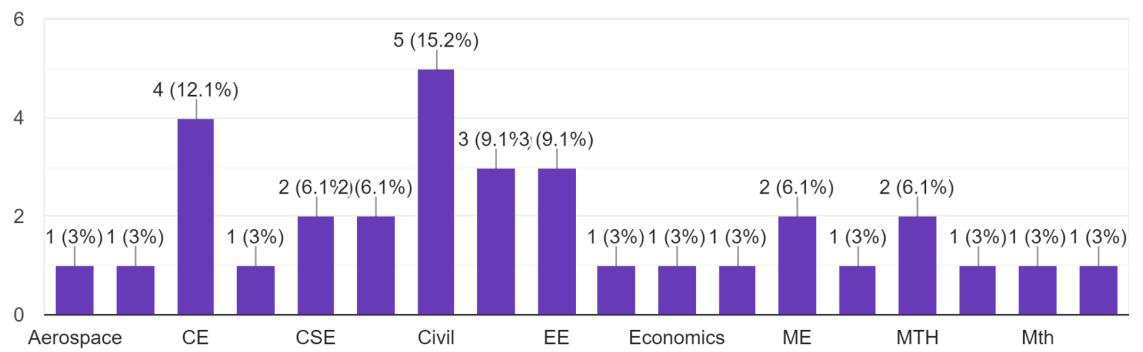
How open were your parents to get you educated?

33 responses



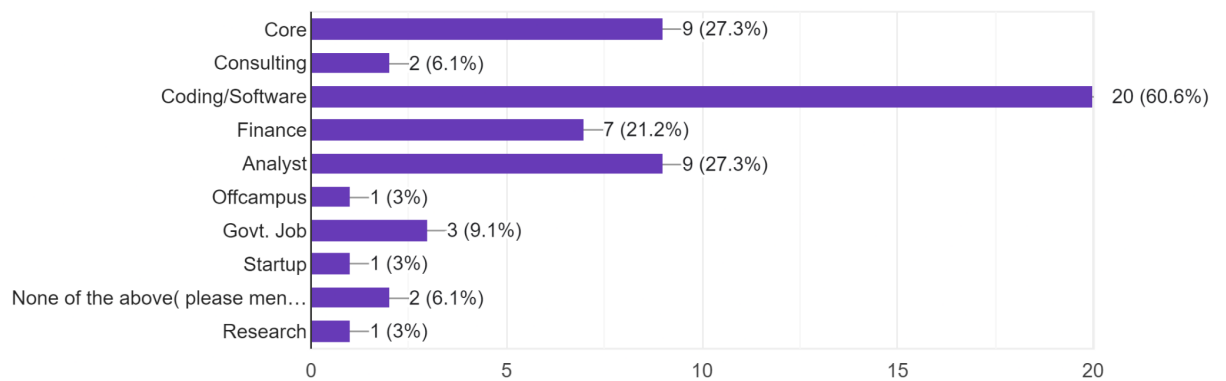
Branch

33 responses



Sector you are preparing for job currently

33 responses



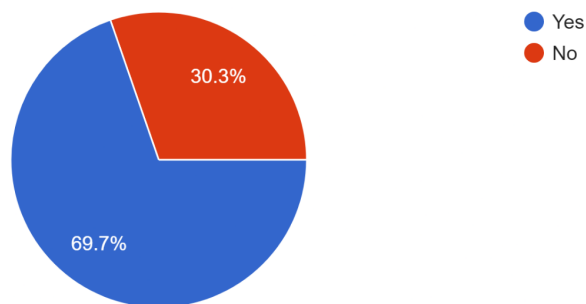
Do you think, your hostel environment and your friend circle played an important role in you being interested/ involved in that sector?

33 responses



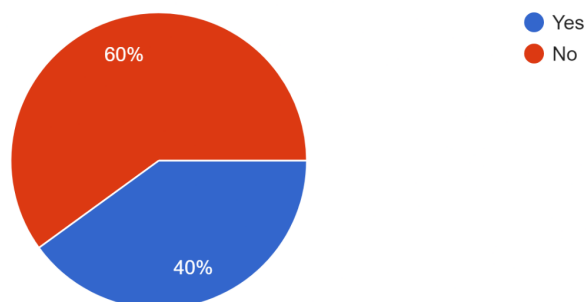
Did you participate in extra-curricular activities at college?if yes, please answer next question.

33 responses



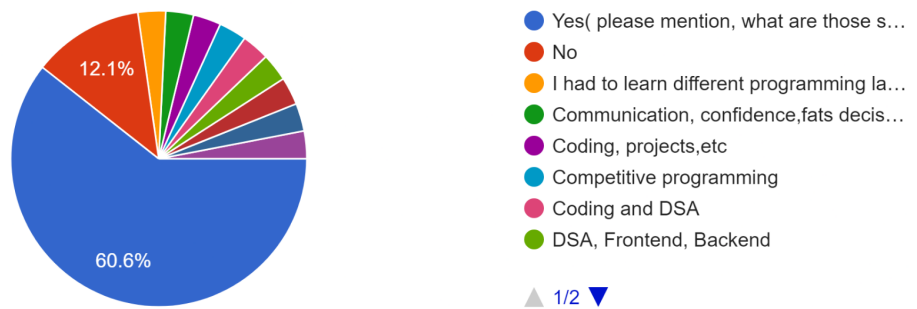
Did participating in these activities helped you grab job/ internship/ppo in the sector you aimed/not aimed?

25 responses



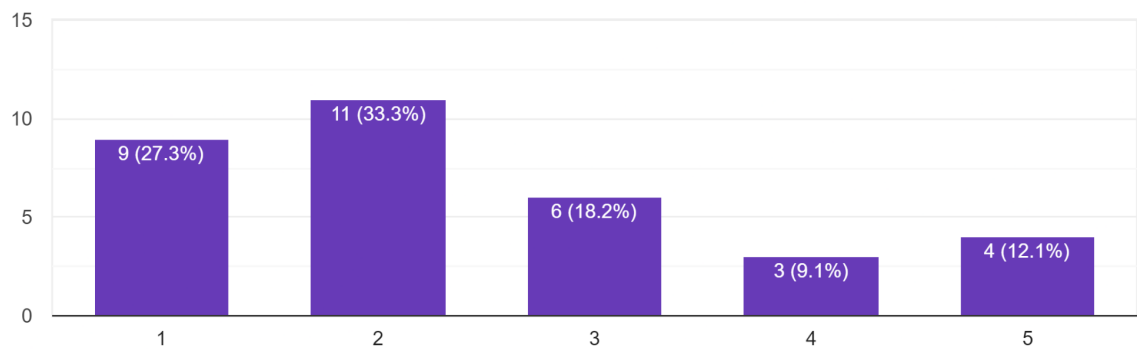
Do you need to learn any additional skills for getting job in your interest sector?

33 responses



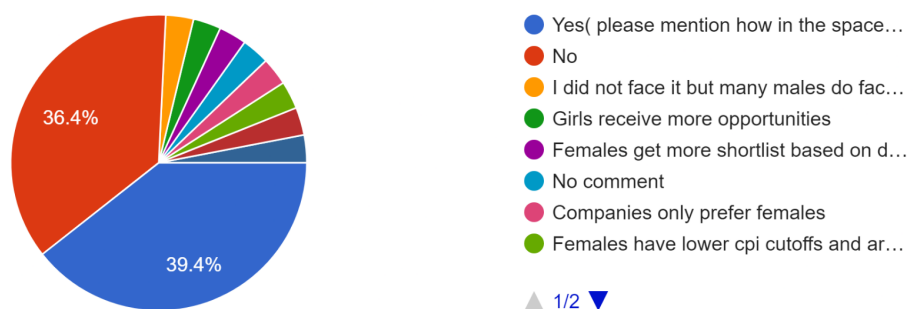
How much confident are you to grab a job in your interest sector/ you have already secured?

33 responses



Do you think, you face gender bias during interviews/securing jobs?

33 responses



V. Results

5.1 Findings

The variables were-Batch (F1), Place of Stay (F2), Hometown (F3), Religion (F4), Category (F5), Population Index of Your Caste in the Region You Live (F6), Education City (F7), Education Type (F8), Parents Education (F9), Family Structure (F10), Economic Conditions (F11), Social Life (F12), Family Openness to study (F13), Extracurricular Activities (F14), Hostel Environment (F15), Branch and Additional Study Beyond Your Branch (F16), Gender(F17)

Batch (F1)

Batch played a major variable in the preference of the students. There is a surge in ratio from 0.6089 to 0.5454 in preferences of y21 to y20 in coding software profiles. This can be a direct result of peer dependency choice. There is not enough sample space to comment about the other sectors dependency on batch.

Place of Stay (F2)

Most of the sample space is from Kanpur city therefore all the data is concentrated in urban metro city. Therefore place of stay is excluded as a variable in preference choice.

Hometown (F3)

This also doesn't factor on the preference of job. According to the survey 3 out of 33 interviewees reported being faced with religion/caste/category discrimination in urban metropolitan cities. In one

Religion (F4)

Three out of 33 interviewees reported to being discriminated during job interviews on the basis of religion. Hinduism and Islam were the two religions whose followers faced the discrimination. 2 out of the 3 of them were also subjected to caste discrimination as they belonged to SC/ST categories. Religion is a variable in job preference, mostly due to the discrimination (if any) by the HR board.

Category (F5)

As already stated, 2 of the interviews faced caste discrimination during job process. Both belonged to SC/ST categories. Also stated by 3 out of 7 interviews in in-depth interviews, they felt that they were rejected by the interview panel only because they belonged to lower caste whereas they performed at par with their colleges from higher castes. Other categories did not feel being subjected to caste discrimination as stated by 14.6% OBC-NCL, 5% OBC and 5.7% General -EWS. Therefore category can be a variable in job preference but the survey found it only to be discriminatory towards SC/ST community.

Population Index of Your Caste in the Region You Live (F6)

The survey did not find any correlation of F6 with any other variable and the job preference during the procedure.

Education City (F7)

The survey found that for 81.81% students the education city was the same as the hometown. For the others it was Kota 72% and Delhi 28%. For our survey mostly received education from either a urban metropolitan city or an urban non-metropolitan city. There can be a relation between the F7 and F12 as expressed by one of the interview drawing the in-depth interviews that changing his/her education city and living in hostels fostered a healthy relation which resulted in his/her social development. Which further led to his/her job preferences being shaped by peers. Also the survey revealed that students migrating to different cities for secondary studies showed good social networks and openness to other people.

Parents Education (F9)

The survey found no relation between parents education and the preference of job choices. F9 and F13 also showed no relation.

Family Structure (F10)

The survey found no relation between family structure and the preference of job choices.

Economic Conditions (F11)

Economic conditions might shape one's decision for job preferences. In 3 out of 7 in-depth interviews, students agreed that their economic condition was a variable for their job choice. Interviewee belonging to well to do families did not apply for low paying companies even still if there was a chance that they might not get one. Which was not the case for not well to do families.

Social Life (F12)

Social life played an important variable in the shaping of job choices. The students who exclaimed that they took turns looking for job opportunities with their peer groups had shared preferences.

Gender (F17)

The study revealed that gender was a determining variable in the job preferences of the students. 40% of the sample size exclaimed that there was gender bias during job selections. 37.1% showed that there were none. It is contradicting as per the contrary result as the responses exclaimed that females received much more preference during job interviews. In some of the in-depth interviews, when asked males expressed their consent to the following fact that females had much more weightage and lower CPI cutoffs.

Also a main result is that male preferences were much more based on the peer groups they were a part of than females. This was expressed by some female participants. This can be due to the hostel bonding that is much more prevalent in boys hostel than in girls.

		preparing for frequency							
batch		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
	g21	8	14	3	2	5	5	0	1
	g20	0	6	0	0	2	1	1	1
	g19	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
city you live in	urban metro	7	20	3	2	4	4	1	2
	urban non metro	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
	rural	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	town	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
Hometown	urban metro	4	9	1	1	2	3	0	0
	urban non metro	3	6	0	1	5	3	0	2
	rural	1	2	2	0	2	1	1	0
	town	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
religion	Hinduism	7	17	3	2	9	7	1	2
	Christianity	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Islam	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Atheist	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Jainism	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
category	General	6	15	4	2	7	5	0	1
	Gen-EV/S	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
	OBC	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0
	OBC-NCL	2	2	0	0	1	1	1	0
	SC/ST	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
Education city	urban metro	8	10	1	1	5	2	0	1
	urban non metro	1	8	0	1	4	4	1	1
	town	1	3	2	0	1	1	0	0
	rural	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
gender	male	5	14	4	2	4	4	1	2
	female	4	7	0	0	6	3	0	0

		preparing for frequency							
Type		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
	private	9	20	4	2	10	6	1	1
	government	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	abroad	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
parents working	none	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	only one	4	13	2	1	8	5	0	1
	both	5	8	2	1	2	1	1	1
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
siblings	0	2	5	0	0	2	2	0	0
	1	6	14	2	2	8	3	1	2
	>1	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	0
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
economic conditions	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	1
	2	6	10	2	2	8	2	1	0
	3	1	8	2	0	0	1	0	1
	4	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0
	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
social life	1	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	1
	2	1	6	2	1	0	3	0	1
	3	2	11	2	0	5	1	1	0
	4	3	3	0	0	2	1	0	0
	5 not prefer socializing	1	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
		preparing for frequency							
		Core	Coding/Software	Govt. Job	Consulting	Analyst	Finance	Research	startup
branch	CSE	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0
	EE	1	3	0	0	0	2	0	0
	MTH	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
	ME	0	2	0	1	1	1	0	1
	CE	5	7	3	0	3	3	0	1
	ECO	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	AERO	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MSE	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	CHM	1	1	0	0	3	0	0	0
	ES	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	BSBE	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0

Hypothesis Of The Study

Hypothesis 1: Gender ,Social life,Economic conditions, Category and Batch were the variables on which job preferences is dependent.

Discussions:

The findings of this study shed light on the complex interplay of various factors influencing job preferences among students at IIT Kanpur, with a particular emphasis on gender-related issues. The discussion of these findings encompasses the following key points:

1. Role of Batch and Peer Influence: The study revealed that students' batch played a substantial role in shaping their job preferences. A shift in preferences from one batch to another was evident, suggesting the influence of peer choices. This phenomenon highlights the importance of peer relationships and shared experiences within a batch in guiding career decisions. Educational institutions can leverage this insight to foster a supportive peer environment that positively impacts students' career aspirations.

2. Hometown and Religion: Hometown and religion were found to have a limited impact on job preferences. Discrimination based on religion was reported by some students, particularly those belonging to the Hindu and Muslim faiths. However, this was not a widespread issue. Furthermore, caste-based discrimination was more prevalent, mainly affecting students from SC/ST categories. These findings emphasize the need for promoting inclusive and unbiased recruitment practices in the workplace.

3. Education City and Social Networks: The study revealed that students who studied in cities different from their hometown often developed strong social networks. These networks played a crucial role in shaping their job preferences. The influence of peers and the support of social networks were evident in the decisions made by students. Educational institutions should consider the importance of facilitating an environment that encourages social interactions and peer collaborations, as they can significantly impact students' career choices.

4. Economic Conditions: Economic conditions were identified as a significant factor influencing job preferences. Students from well-to-do families were more selective in their job applications, avoiding lower-paying opportunities. In contrast, students from less affluent backgrounds were more open to diverse job opportunities, reflecting the role of economic status in career decisions. Employers and policymakers should consider these economic disparities and work towards providing equal opportunities to candidates from various economic backgrounds.

5. Gender Bias: Gender bias emerged as a crucial determinant of job preferences. Female students reported facing discrimination in job selections, while male students indicated that females often received preferential treatment during job interviews. The role of gender in job preferences is a significant concern, and steps should be taken to address and eliminate gender bias in recruitment and career advancement. The study also highlighted that male preferences were more influenced by peer groups, potentially due to stronger hostel bonds among male students. Understanding these gender dynamics is essential for promoting gender equality in career opportunities.

Overall, the study demonstrates the multifaceted nature of job preference determinants and the need to consider a wide range of factors in career counselling and recruitment. The findings underscore the significance of gender equality and inclusivity in career opportunities within educational institutions and workplaces. Future research should delve deeper into these areas to foster more equitable career pathways for all students and employees. Educational institutions and employers can play a pivotal role in creating environments that support diverse and inclusive career choices.

Conclusion:

In this study, we explored various factors influencing the job preferences of students at IIT Kanpur, with a particular focus on gender-related issues. The variables considered in the analysis encompassed a wide range of demographic, social, and economic factors. The following conclusions can be drawn from the findings:

1. Batch (F1): Batch played a significant role in shaping students' job preferences, with coding software profiles showing a noticeable shift in preferences from one batch to another. This suggests the influence of peer choices within the same batch.
2. Place of Stay (F2): Since most of the sample came from Kanpur, the place of stay was not found to be a significant variable in job preference.
3. Hometown (F3): Hometown did not appear to factor into job preference decisions, and very few interviewees reported instances of religion/caste/category discrimination in urban metropolitan cities.
4. Religion (F4): Religion did play a role in job preference, with some interviewees reporting discrimination during job interviews based on their religious background, particularly for Hinduism and Islam.
5. Category (F5): Caste-based discrimination was reported during job interviews, mainly affecting individuals from SC/ST categories. Other categories did not report such discrimination.
6. Population Index of Your Caste in the Region You Live (F6): This variable did not exhibit a significant correlation with job preference.
7. Education City (F7): For many students, the education city was the same as their hometown, and it influenced their job preferences, indicating the importance of peer relationships formed during education.
8. Parents Education (F9): Parents' education level did not appear to significantly impact job preferences.
9. Family Structure (F10): Family structure did not seem to affect job preferences.
10. Economic Conditions (F11): Economic conditions played a role in job preferences, with some students indicating that their economic status influenced their choices.
11. Social Life (F12): Social life had a significant impact on job preferences, with students who shared preferences often participating in the job search together.
12. Gender (F17): Gender was a notable determinant of job preferences. Gender bias was reported during job selections, with males suggesting that females received preferential treatment. Additionally, male preferences were more influenced by peer groups, possibly due to stronger hostel bonds among male students.

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