

Business Problem Identification

Jain University is an established, private university in India. Enrollment is increasing, but job placement is lacking. Dean Iyer's goal is to employ 100% of the school's graduates. Jain's reputation hinges on its ability to place graduates in well-paying roles. Without a clearly defined problem and action plan, Jain may suffer a similar fate as other Indian universities that had to close because they could not compete due to poor placement outcomes and declining student interest. We used a SWOT Analysis to begin pinpointing the University's problems and come up with a plausible way forward.

SWOT Analysis: Jain University

	Internal	
	Strengths	Weaknesses
	Opportunities	Threats
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Jain is the top private institution in South India and the 2nd private institution in the countryThe school boasts increasing enrollment each year and is one of the more prestigious institutions in India	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Jain's primary weakness is its inability to employ 100% of its graduates due to weak admissions metrics. Currently, the school's post-graduate employment rate stands at 80%
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Jain University faces several external threats, one of which is the economy.The shrinking job market for business school graduates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Jain's admission committee uses standardized test scores, grades, interviews, and employment history as key metrics (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 1). This appears to be a solid approach, but it does not account for innumerable experiences or traits.

Strengths

Jain is the top private institution in South India and the 2nd private institution in the country (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 3). Additionally, the school boasts increasing enrollment each year and is one of the more prestigious institutions in India (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 1). These strengths are important for a few reasons. The University has a large enough applicant pool to find the right candidates. They can be more

specific in their selectiveness to ensure new students are employable. Secondly, many employers place value on the institutions graduates attend, and this influences the salaries graduates can expect to earn. According to Exhibit B, students graduating from top-tier universities earned at least 9 lakhs, but those from the lowest tier earned 3 lakhs or less (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 5).

Weaknessess

Jain's primary weakness is its inability to employ 100% of its graduates due to weak admissions metrics. Currently, the school's post-graduate employment rate stands at 80% (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 4). In 2010, 98-100% of graduates from top-tier schools were employed (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 5). Jain is on the high end of the tier-2 list, but they are not competing with the top schools. Jain's admission committee uses standardized test scores, grades, interviews, and employment history as key metrics (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 1). This appears to be a solid approach, but it does not account for innumerable experiences or traits.

Opportunities

Jain University's higher enrollment numbers present a better opportunity to maximize employable graduates. The larger sampling size should mean the institution can be even more selective while maintaining optimal matriculation rates. Furthermore, highly competitive companies recruit students from the top business schools (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 4). If the University can pre-select the ideal candidates for these jobs during enrollment, they may have a better chance of placing more of their students.

Threats

Jain University faces several external threats, one of which is the economy. Economic downturns in 2002, 2008, and 2013 harmed employment rates (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 3). Graduates need a healthy job market to secure a job. Another external threat is the shrinking job market for business school graduates. Employment amongst all graduates was 54% in 2008, but just 10% in 2013. That is a sharp decline (Ganatra and Kumar, 2014, p. 1). The top schools now have to work even harder to ensure their students are prepared to compete in the market.

Problem Statement

In completing this analysis, we identified Jain University's problem as such:

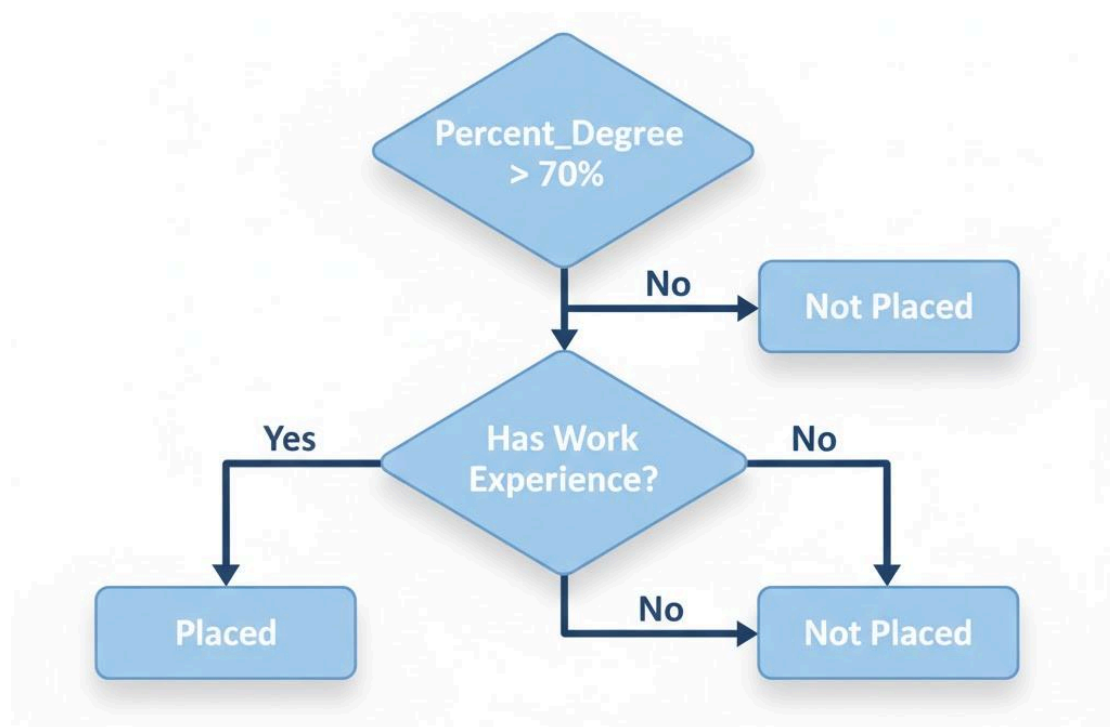
The institution lacks a clear, data-driven strategy for selecting students who will not only succeed academically but also secure employment after graduation.

An issue lies in the university's reliance on traditional admission metrics that inaccurately predict employability. The university should use its reputation and large applicant pool to counter the threat of a tough job market. By creating predictive admission metrics, they can be more selective and choose students who are more likely to succeed, making the university more resilient to the poor hiring environment.

Business Analysis Tools

To identify the underlying cause of this business problem, we used different analysis tools detailed below.

Decision Tree



For the Dean's dilemma, the decision tree would analyze past student data to determine the best questions to ask to predict whether a new applicant will be placed or not. The decision tree is a practical data analysis tool that can help solve the problem by building a predictive model for student placements. For the Dean's data, the algorithm tests every possible question (I.e., "Is Percent_Degree > 70%?", "Is Experience_Yrs > 0?") and chooses the one that creates the purest groups of "Placed" and "Not Placed" students. That question becomes the root node.

Root Cause Analysis

We used the "5 Whys" root cause analysis technique to understand the cause-and-effect relationships behind the problem. Let's start with the core problem statement from the case: approximately 20% of the MBA students were not placed through campus initiatives.

Problem: 20% of students are not being placed.

1. Why might the students not have been placed?

1. Because the university may have admitted students who were not of a high enough caliber.

2. Why would they admit students who might not be the right fit for the program?

1. Because the admissions vetting process wasn't strong enough to filter them out.

3. The case mentions that the committee considers an applicant's academic grades, entrance test scores, and work experience. Why might these criteria not be strong enough to predict which student will actually be employable?

1. There could be a great variance in these metrics across different schools and backgrounds. For example, an "A" grade from one university might not be the same as an "A" from another.

4. Why would the admissions committee continue to rely on these traditional metrics (3), even if they might be flawed?

1. Other external influences could affect these metrics that have not been taken into account.

They're relying on the data they have because they may not have a system in place to account for those external influences or to better identify predictors of success.

5. Why hasn't the committee moved towards a data-driven admissions method, given the flaws in their traditional metrics?

1. They have not built a data-driven model to determine which specific criteria can predict student placement/employability; their decision-making relies on intuitive criteria with limited data to support evidence-based selection.

In working through the 5 Whys, we started with the issue of poor placement as a root cause that the university can use to fix the issue. Instead of relying on their existing metrics, which have been inconsistent, they need to start using their own data to build a smarter, more predictive admissions model.

Conclusion

The Dean's Dilemma highlights the critical need for Jain University to align its admissions strategy with employability outcomes. While the institution enjoys a strong reputation and a growing applicant pool, the lack of a data-driven selection process undermines placement performance. By adopting analytical tools, such as a root cause analysis and a decision tree, the university can identify the factors that best predict student success and refine its admission criteria accordingly. Implementing such an evidence-based approach will enhance placement rates, strengthen the university's competitiveness, and ensure sustained growth in the evolving management education landscape.