

Standardized Tests in College Admissions

1. *What are the SAT and ACT? (High Level)*
2. *Problem Statement and pertinent data*
3. *Important Trends*
4. *Summary of Findings*

What are the SAT and ACT Tests and how are they used?

1. SAT and ACT are standardized tests used for college admissions in the United States
2. Both tests measure skills in areas such as reading, writing, and mathematics
3. **The SAT and ACT have been in use for decades, however, recently there has been a growing trend of colleges and universities moving away from their reliance on these tests as the sole predictor of college success.**

Problem Statement & Data

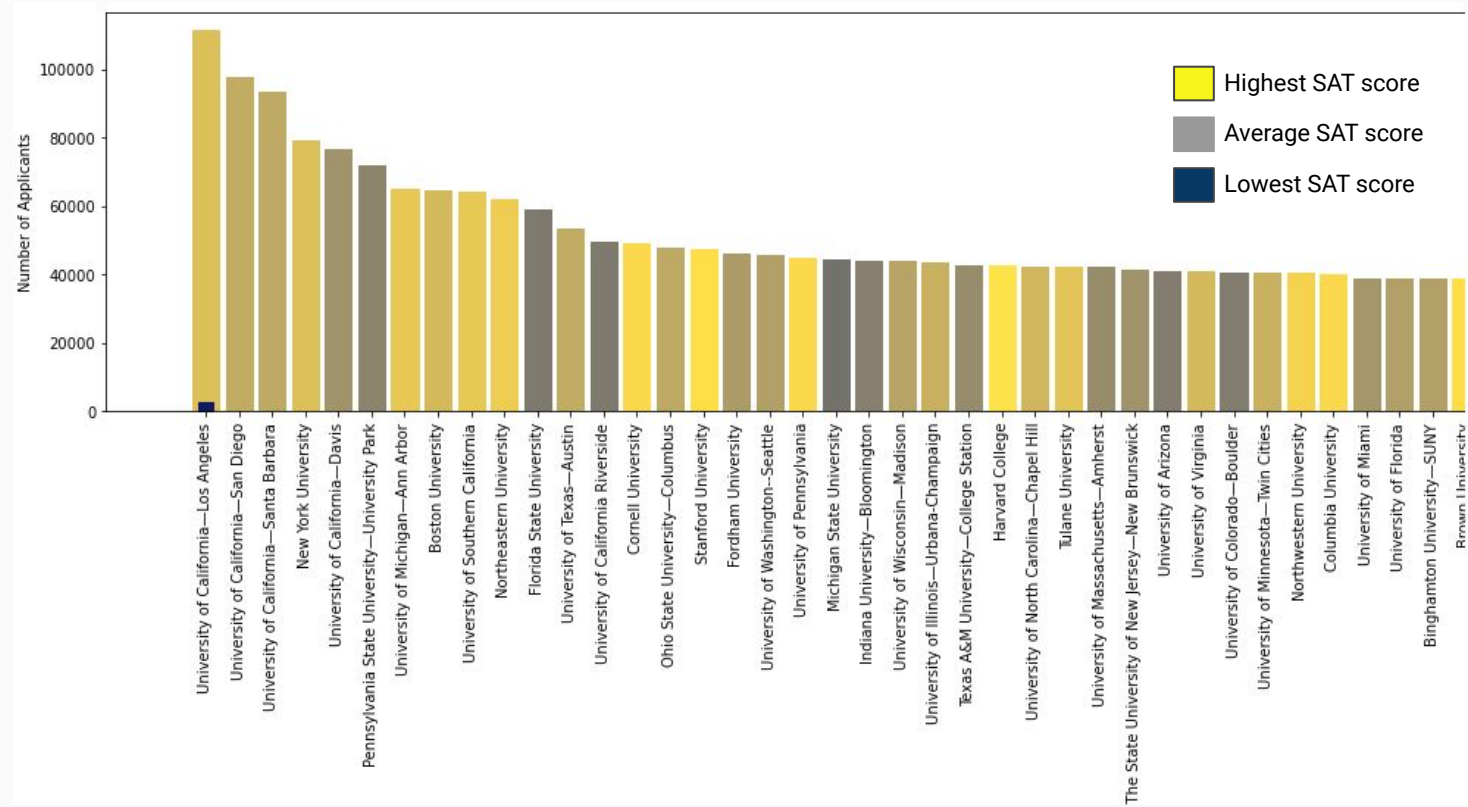
Problem Statement: The findings from this analysis will provide insight into the validity of the SAT and ACT exams as a tool for college admissions

Two datasets were selected to complete this analysis:

- SAT Data sorted by State
 - This dataset provides information regarding students' SAT scores and tendencies by US State from 2019
- SAT and ACT Data sorted by College
 - This dataset contains SAT and ACT data for each college, including information regarding interquartile scores, the admissions rate, and total applicants per school.

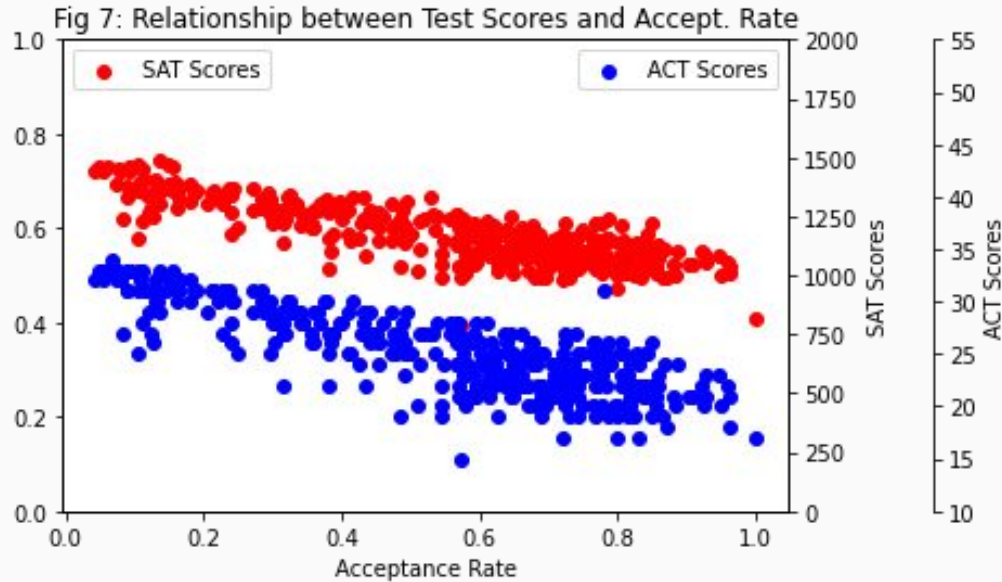
Valuable Trends (What are the most selective Universities Doing?)

Trend #1: The most selective Universities receive the most applications and require high test scores

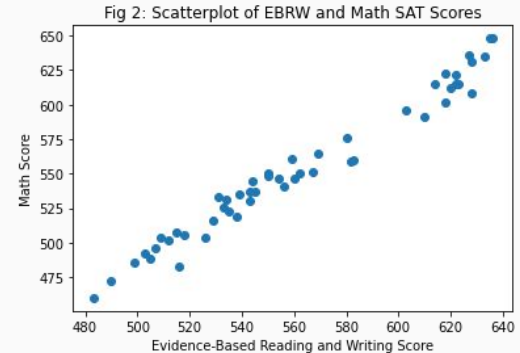


Valuable Trends (Is one test better than the other?)

Trend #2: ACT and SAT Test Takers can Expect similar Admissions Rates

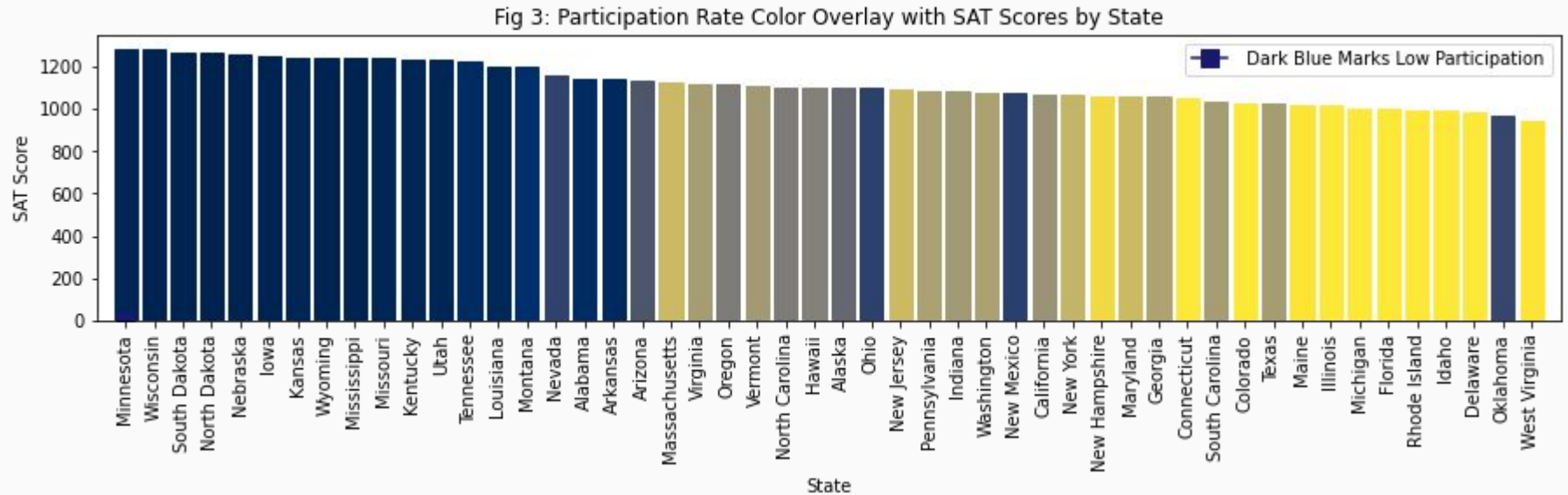


In Fall 2021, **54%** percent of students took the SAT vs the 31% who took the ACT ^[3]



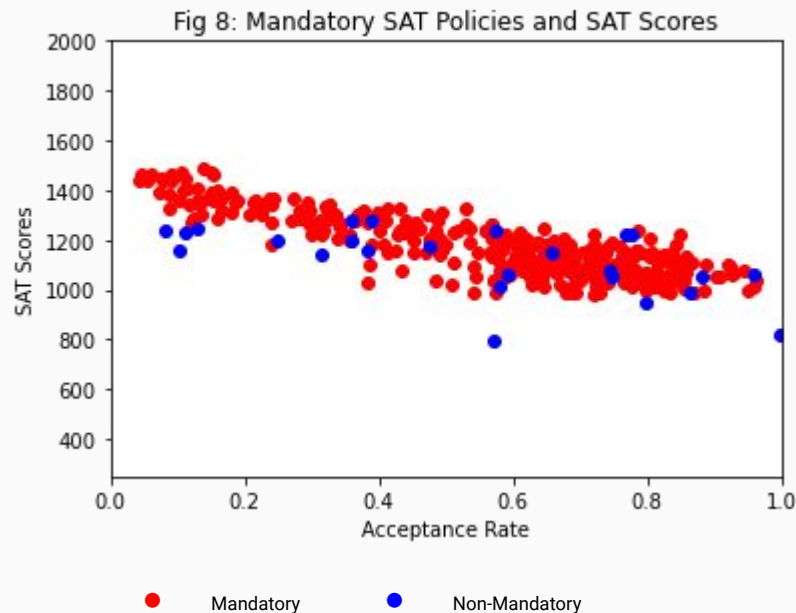
Valuable Trends (How does participation affect the aggregate scores?)

Trend #3: Participation Rate strongly correlates with a lower statewide SAT score



Valuable Trends (How do 'Mandatory SAT' college's compare to 'non-Mandatory'?)

Trend #4: With limited data, schools without a mandatory SAT policy have roughly correlated acceptance rates as schools with mandatory SAT policies



College Board estimated that over 90% of four-year colleges and universities in the U.S. required applicants to submit scores from either the SAT or ACT in 2017

The Hill, (The News Outlet) states that this year (2023) only 4% of schools will require test scores as part of admissions

Conclusions

1. *The most selective institutions require high test scores, but also receive a large number of applicants*
2. *Admissions rate is equivalent for similar SAT and ACT scores*
3. *Admissions test policies had no effect on admissions rate (limited data)*
4. *Participation rate is a strong indicator of State test success*
5. *Standardized test requirements are becoming less common*

The data suggest that the SAT and ACT exams may provide beneficial data to help predict a student's success, but they should not be relied upon as the sole indicator of a student's potential.

References

1. <https://blog.prepscholar.com/colleges-requiring-all-sat-scores-complete-list>
Prepscholar. (n.d.). Colleges Requiring All SAT Scores: Complete List. [Blog post].
2. <https://thehill.com/changing-america/enrichment/education/3758713-in-college-admissions-test-optional-is-the-new-normal/>
Reference: The Hill. (n.d.). In College Admissions, Test Optional is the New Normal. [News article].
3. <https://www.collegeraptor.com/getting-in/articles/act-sat/act-vs-sat-which-college-entrance-exam-is-more-popular/#:~:text=In%20Fall%202021%2C%20though%2054,ACT%20according%20to%20College%20Navigator.>
Reference: College Raptor. (2021). ACT vs SAT: Which College Entrance Exam is More Popular? [Online].