

## EVALUATING THE ROLE OF INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT IN CAMPUS PLACEMENT READINESS

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### ABSTRACT:

Students' transitions from academic life to professional careers are significantly influenced by campus placements. While individual student effort remains important, institutional support mechanisms significantly influence placement readiness and outcomes. This study evaluates the multifaceted role of institutional support—ranging from career counseling, skill development workshops, mock interviews, mentorship programs, to internship facilitation in preparing students for campus placements. Using a mixed-methods approach, data was collected through surveys, interviews, and placement records across multiple institutions to assess the effectiveness and perception of these support systems. The findings reveal that structured institutional involvement directly correlates with increased student confidence, improved interview performance, and higher placement rates. Moreover, institutions that integrate continuous skill development and industry engagement into their curriculum tend to produce more placement-ready graduates. The study underscores the necessity for educational institutions to adopt a holistic support framework that aligns with industry expectations and evolving job market trends. Recommendations are offered for enhancing institutional strategies to maximize placement success and student career readiness.

### INTRODUCTION:

In today's competitive job market, securing employment immediately after graduation is a key concern for students across disciplines. Campus placements have become a critical indicator of an institution's success and a student's readiness for professional life. However, placement readiness is not solely the outcome of academic performance; it also depends significantly on the support provided by educational institutions throughout the student's journey. Institutional support, in the form of career services, training modules, soft skills workshops, resume-building sessions, mock interviews, and mentorship programs, plays a vital role in shaping students' preparedness for placement opportunities.

As industries continue to demand not only technical proficiency but also communication skills, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities, institutions are increasingly expected to act as facilitators that bridge the gap between academia and employability. Despite this, there remains a disparity in how institutions approach placement preparation and in how students perceive and utilize available support systems.

This study seeks to evaluate the extent and effectiveness of institutional support in enhancing placement readiness among students. By analyzing various support structures and their perceived impact, this research aims to identify best practices and provide actionable insights for institutions striving to improve student employability. Understanding this dynamic is crucial not only for improving placement outcomes but also for reinforcing the institution's role in holistic student development.

### LITERATURE REVIEW:

Academic research has paid more and more attention to the transition from academia to employment, particularly in relation to institutional support mechanisms that aim to improve the employability of students. Literature in the field has consistently highlighted the role of career counseling, internship

experiences, and placement support services as vital components of career readiness and successful job placement.

According to Gati and Asher (2001), effective career guidance significantly reduces career indecisiveness and improves alignment between a student's abilities and career goals. In a similar vein, Watts and Fretwell (2004) studies emphasize the significance of personalized early career guidance in enhancing placement outcomes, particularly when utilized in conjunction with psychometric testing, information about the labor market, and one-on-one mentoring.

Maree (2013) argue that the impact of counseling services may vary significantly based on how they are implemented and whether they are tailored to diverse student populations. Research by Gault, Leach, and Duey (2010) found that students who completed internships were significantly more likely to receive job offers prior to graduation.

According to Callanan & Benzing (2004), internships not only assist students in developing skills specific to the industry, but they also enhance soft skills like teamwork, communication, and time management. The concept of “experiential learning” (Kolb, 1984) further supports the argument that real-world exposure accelerates career readiness. Narayanan et al., (2010).

However, the level of supervision, the relevance of the tasks, and the length of the program can all affect how effective internships are. Students who actively engage with these services report higher levels of self-efficacy and interview preparedness, according to a Jackson (2016) study. Tomlinson (2017). Institutions that invest in integrated support services where counseling, internships, and placement are aligned tend to report higher placement percentages and better employer feedback

#### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:**

Despite the increasing emphasis on employability and job readiness, a significant number of graduates struggle to secure placements through campus recruitment drives. While academic achievement is frequently prioritized, many students lack the industry exposure, professional competencies, and practical skills that employers require. This disconnect raises concerns about the adequacy and effectiveness of institutional support systems designed to prepare students for placement opportunities.

Although most educational institutions offer some form of placement assistance, there is a wide variation in the structure, availability, and quality of these support services. In many cases, students are unaware of or do not fully engage with the resources provided, while others may find the support insufficient or misaligned with current industry expectations. As a result, there is a pressing need to critically evaluate the role that institutional support plays in influencing placement readiness.

The aim of this study is to find a solution to the issue by looking at how students' readiness for placements is affected by institutional support, pointing out flaws in current systems, and making suggestions for bridging the gap between education and employment. The core issue lies in determining whether institutional efforts are effectively equipping students with the necessary skills and confidence to succeed in campus recruitment processes.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:**

- To evaluate the impact of institutional support in placements preparation.
- To provide actionable recommendations for improving the structure, delivery, and integration of career support by the institutions.

#### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:**

A structured quantitative survey was administered to gather data on students' access to placement-related resources such as soft skills training, aptitude preparation, career guidance, resume building

sessions, and opportunities for industry interaction. The questionnaire also included self-assessment items on students' confidence levels and perceived preparedness for placement interviews.

### AREA OF STUDY

This study focuses on Pollachi, a semi-urban area in the Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu, India. Known for its strong presence of arts and science colleges, Pollachi serves as an educational hub for students from nearby rural and suburban areas. The region includes a mix of government-aided, self-financed, and autonomous institutions that offer undergraduate programs across disciplines such as Commerce, Management, Computer Science and Life Sciences. With 721 respondents, the study provides a significant data set representing the final-year undergraduate population in Pollachi's arts and science colleges, offering valuable insights into the gaps, strengths, and opportunities for improving placement preparation through targeted institutional support. Because these colleges primarily serve students who are first-generation learners and come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, institutional support for placement preparation is especially important for these students' transition into the workforce.

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This part of the study examines the level of satisfaction on institutional factors related to placement support to students. This includes a set of four statements about career counseling sessions, internship opportunities, placement training programs, opportunities to network with alumni, and resume-building workshops that are related to the level of satisfaction with institutional factors that relate to students' placement support. The students were asked to rate each statement on a Likert five-point scale, where 1= Highly Satisfied, 2= Satisfied, 3= Neutral, 4= Dissatisfied, and 5= Highly Dissatisfied. All the opinions are used to calculate individual and total scores to assess the overall level of satisfaction on institutional factors related to placement support to students. As a result, the satisfaction rating will range from four to twenty. The score value with less than 12 is considered as Highly Satisfied, the score value equal to 12 is considered Neutral, and more than 12 is considered as Highly Dissatisfied. In the beginning, descriptive statistics were used to look at how satisfied students were with institutional factors related to placement support and student preparation. The results are shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Level of Satisfaction on Institutional Factors Related to Placement Support to students - Descriptive Statistics**

Level of Satisfaction	N	% of Total N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Highly Satisfied	22	3.1%	185.00	8.4091	2.61241	6.825
Neutral	57	7.9%	684.00	12.0000	.00000	.000
Highly Dissatisfied	642	89.0%	10430.00	16.2461	1.74913	3.059
Total	721	100.0%	11299.00	15.6713	2.42816	5.896

**Source: Primary Data**

Table-1 exhibits that level of satisfaction on institutional factors related to placement support to students. Out of 721 students mean score found between 8.41 and 16.25. It is executed to check the significant difference in mean of score of UG students' general profile with regard to the level of satisfaction. The hypotheses are proposed to test at 5 % level of significance.

### Impact of Effectiveness score on Institutional Support in Placement Preparation

The regression model aims to evaluate how various general profile of students on influence level of satisfaction on institutional factors related to placement support to students' scores. These predictors like age, gender, residential area, CGPA/Percentage, First-generation graduate, participation in placement training or workshop, number of placement interviews attended, type of job preferred.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis on Factors Influencing Effectiveness score of Institutional Support in Placement Preparation**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	12.169	1.004		12.125	.000
Age	1.196*	.288	.156	4.155	.000
Gender	-.199	.189	-.041	-1.058	.291
Residence	.077	.103	.028	.748	.455
Current CGPA/Percentage	.092	.105	.034	.881	.379
first-generation Graduate	.070	.184	.014	.382	.702
Participation in Placement Training or Workshops	-.118	.220	-.020	-.539	.590
Number of Placement Interviews Attended	.367**	.182	.076	2.016	.044
Type of Job Preferred	-.036	.135	-.010	-.268	.789
R	.181				
R Square	.033				
Adjusted R Square	.022				
F	3.021				.002

Source: Primary data      \*Significant at 1% level.      \*\*Significant at 5% level.

The table-2 indicated that the relationship between various general profile of students and perceived level of satisfaction on institutional factors related to placement support to students. The R<sup>2</sup> and adjusted R<sup>2</sup> values are found at 0.033 and 0.022 respectively. Therefore, general profile of students explained 3.3% variation in relation with impact of level of satisfaction on institutional factors related to placement support to students. According to the regression model, age and the number of placement interviews attended are significant predictors of student satisfaction with institutional placement support factors. The other variables like gender, residential area, CGPA/Percentage, First-generation graduate, participation in placement training or workshop, type of job preferred, do not show significant relationships with satisfaction on institutional factors related to placement support to students.

## FINDINGS

- The majority of students are extremely dissatisfied with the existing placement support mechanisms; significant issues with these mechanisms must be resolved.
- The general student profile accounted for 3.3% of the variation in relation to the influence of level of satisfaction on institutional factors pertaining to placement support for students.
- The regression model shows that age and Number of Placement Interviews Attended are significant predictor of satisfaction on institutional factors related to placement support to students.
- The other variables like gender, residential area, CGPA/Percentage, First-generation graduate, participation in placement training or workshop, type of job preferred, do not show significant relationships with satisfaction on institutional factors related to placement support to students

## SUGGESTIONS

- The institutions have to review and revamp their placement support services to the better needs and expectations of their students.
- Personalized mentoring helps students to align career goals with skill sets that which helps to reduces student confusion and improves placement confidence.

- Schools that teach students how to communicate, lead, and interact with others better prepare them for HR rounds and behavioral interviews.
- In MNC recruitments, language labs or training for global English and business etiquette increase chances.
- Higher offer rates are seen at institutions that offer company-specific preparation guides like past patterns and role-specific mock tests.
- A methodical collection of recruiter feedback from interviews in order to improve subsequent training

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The significance of this study lies in the fact that it provides a critical evaluation of the roles that internship programs, career counseling, and other support services play in improving student placement outcomes. As higher education institutions face increasing pressure to produce graduates who are not only academically proficient but also equipped with the skills and experiences required by the workforce, it is essential to comprehend the efficacy of these support systems. By assessing the impact of career development interventions, the study contributes valuable insights into how these services influence students' employability, job readiness, and overall success in securing relevant employment. Furthermore, the findings will help institutions refine and tailor their career support offerings to better align with the needs of students and the expectations of employers, ultimately improving the employability of graduates. From a broader perspective, this research highlights the importance of continuous improvement in student support services to address evolving market demands and foster equitable access to career resources for all students. Ultimately, this study serves as a foundation for developing more effective, personalized, and sustainable career support models that can bridge the gap between education and employment in an increasingly competitive global job market.

### **SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

In addition to providing valuable insights into the impact of internship programs, career counseling, and other support services on student placement outcomes, this study also highlights several avenues for future research. The long-term effects of these services on career development, job satisfaction, and workforce retention could be studied using a longitudinal approach in subsequent research. In addition, it is possible to investigate how the efficiency of support services varies across academic fields, enabling institutions to tailor interventions to the particular requirements of various fields. Online internships, AI-based placement tools, and virtual career counseling all have the potential to improve accessibility and efficiency as digital technologies become increasingly ingrained in education. Gender, socioeconomic background, and geographic location all play a role in students' access to and outcomes from these services, and further research into these factors has the potential to advance more equitable and inclusive practices. In addition, incorporating employer feedback into future research may help bridge the gap between academic preparation and industry expectations and provide a more comprehensive picture of graduate readiness. Overall, expanding the scope in these directions can contribute to the development of more responsive, personalized, and future-ready career support systems.

### **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

- The findings may be limited to the specific educational institution, geographic region, or student population under study, and may not be generalizable to all types of institutions or industries.
- The research primarily evaluates immediate outcomes such as placement rates and job readiness, without examining long-term career development, job satisfaction, or retention in the workforce.

- Other personal factors, such as student motivation, socioeconomic background, or individual career aspirations, which also play a crucial role in placement success, are not fully addressed in the study.
- The study does not incorporate employer perspectives on graduate readiness, which may provide additional insights into the alignment between educational outcomes and industry expectations.

### CONCLUSION

In today's hyper-competitive job market, a degree alone is no longer the passport to professional success. The real differentiator lies in the depth, diversity, and dynamism of institutional support that bridges the gap between academic learning and industry expectations. From personalized mentorship and mental wellness initiatives to company-specific training and global exposure, institutions play the role of career architects, not just educators. Institutional support doesn't just influence placement outcomes it shapes mindsets, builds resilience, and empowers students to thrive beyond the interview room. The impact is not measured merely in offer letters, but in the confidence, clarity, and competence students carry into the world of work. In essence, when institutions invest in holistic placement preparation, they are not just placing students they are launching futures.

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