

Correlates of Satisfaction & Giving Behavior of IT Working Professionals in Delhi NCR

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Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to develop a perspective that alumni satisfaction has an impact their giving behavior towards the alma mater. This paper proposes that level of satisfaction of alumni can be enhanced by improving the under-graduate experience of alumni, which in turn can encourage the giving behavior of alumni.

Design/Methodology: A survey was conducted among alumni of 2 different technical institutions in and around Delhi NCR, India. The data was collected from 109 respondents through a self-constructed questionnaire based on a five-point Likert-type scale. The reliability of the questionnaire was computed to have a Cronbach's α of 0.84.

Findings: The key findings of the research show a significant positive relationship between alumni satisfaction and willingness for social giving behavior towards alma mater ($r= 0.348$; $p \leq 0.01$). Working professionals were not found to be satisfied with the overall educational experience at their alma mater. This low level of satisfaction can be accounted to the preparation they received for pursuing further studies at another college/institution and also to the preparation they received at their alma mater for their current employment.

Research Limitations: First, findings of this study cannot be generalized since it has been conducted within a sample of 109 only. The study can be done with bigger sample size and also including various other variables such as infrastructural facilities, faculty support, etc. Second, the sample were all IT working professionals, further research can include alumni from other disciplines also such as management, sciences, etc.

Originality: This paper studies the level of satisfaction of working professionals and its relationship with the social giving behavior of alumni. So far there have been many studies in West about the giving behavior of alumni which has focussed on the financial aspect only. Till date there has been no study to assess the feelings of alumni towards their alma mater in India. Indeed, this paper is an initiative in the direction of studying the relationship alumni share with their alma mater.

Abstract

This paper analyses the relationship shared between working professional and their alma mater. Alumni are the primary representative of the institution in the outside world. These days' public as well as private colleges and universities depend upon their alumni for financial and social support so, it becomes imperative to study and examine the level of satisfaction and giving behavior of working professionals with their alma mater which will help to formulate a framework for the institution to improve their relations with the alumni and enhance giving behavior of alumni. This study has been conducted in Delhi/NCR region among alumni of public as well as private institutions offering technical education.

Keywords: alumni, alma mater, technical institution, satisfaction, giving behavior, India

1. Introduction

According to Taylor and Massey (1996), "Alumni are a unique, select and continuing source of support that is one of the most valuable resources any institution has". As former students and internal stakeholders of the university, the alumni come to represent its external stakeholders upon graduation: as clients

(if they continue with postgraduate and further education courses at the same university, or if they take advantage of its expert and research services, as beneficiaries), as suppliers (if they can provide professional services in support of the alma mater), as collaborators (on research projects or other areas), as partners (in various actions), as sponsors or donors for some of the university's activities, as volunteers, consultants, or even competitors

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(if they will set-up a competing university), etc. Of all the categories of human resources in a university, we think that alumni, in spite of its major potential, it is the least capitalised (refer figure 1).

In the past, institutions have had no concrete incentives to keep systematic track of alumni. It is not uncommon to hear of institutions that are still without records of all graduates or even information on the current addresses of living graduates. Private institutions and smaller schools in general are ahead of public institutions, especially the large ones, in tracking their graduates. At the other end of the spectrum, many community colleges have only recently joined in the pursuit of their alumni.

2. Literature Review

Alumni satisfaction is not a significant predictor of willingness to give, but also has an indirect effect through alumni involvement. Measures of obligation to give did not achieve significance, along with preferences to give to other educational institutions or charitable causes, earning a degree at other educational institutions, transferring, subsequent attendance at a top-tier institution, loan aid, and other demographic variables (Hoyt, 2004).

Gaier (2005) found that there were significant increases in both alumni giving and alumni participation based on the level of alumni satisfaction with the undergraduate academic experience. As alumni satisfaction increased so did the odds of alumni giving and alumni participation. Thus alumni who are satisfied with their academic experience are more likely to be involved (i.e., give and/or participate) with the university than those alumni who are not as satisfied with their academic experience. The most significant variables associated with alumni giving were the academic variables that emphasized academic work (e.g. “coursework in major”). The most significant academic variables linked with alumni participation emphasized interpersonal relationships and interactions (e.g. “relationship with faculty and staff”).

According to Monks (2003), the most significant determinant of alumni giving levels is the individual’s satisfaction with his or her undergraduate experience. Respondents who reported that they are “very satisfied” with their undergraduate experience gave over 2.6 times as much to their alma mater as graduates who were “ambivalent,” “generally dissatisfied,” or “very dissatisfied.” Similarly, graduates who were “generally satisfied” gave over 1.8 times as much to their alma mater.

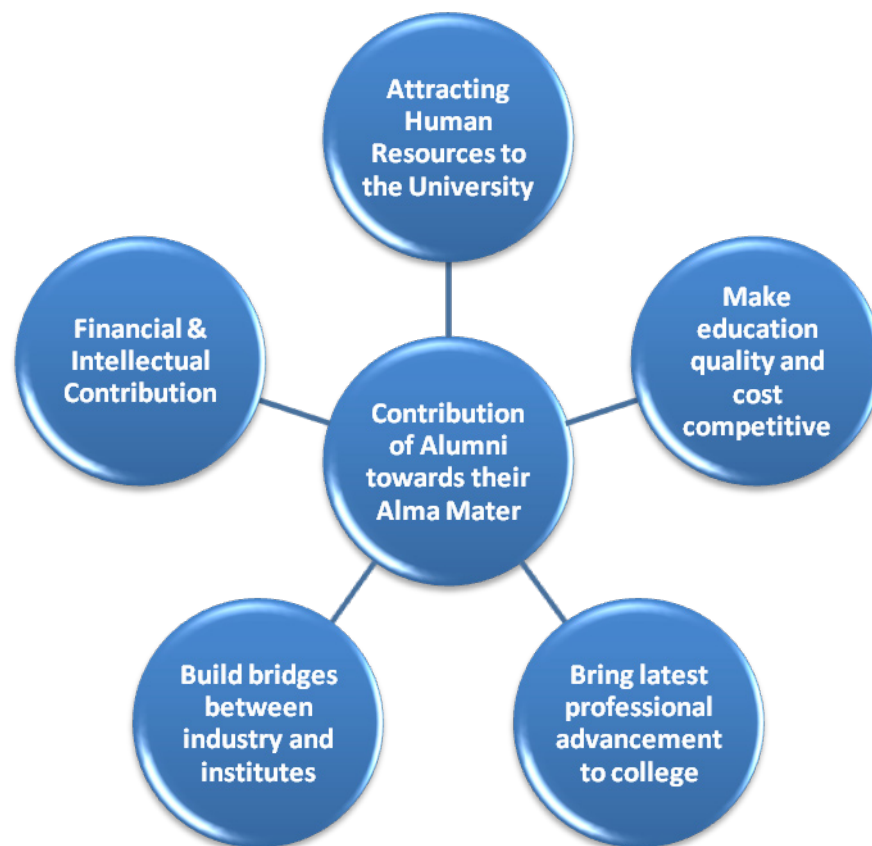


Figure 1. Contribution of alumni towards their alma mater.

Hartman and Schmidt (1995) applied consumer satisfaction framework for investigation the student/alumni satisfaction. They found that student/-alumni satisfaction is dependent upon the degree of goal development that a student has for a particular aspect of education which in turn is based on institutional performance.

Alumni involvement and financial support are related to the emotional attachment and satisfaction of alumni with their alma mater. Research indicates that this attachment is often tied with the undergraduate experience. According to Johnson and Eckel (1997), developing active alumni begins during the educational experience. Alumni who were involved in campus activities gained a higher emotional attachment to the university (Baade & Sundberg, 1993). According to Johnson and Eckel (1997), "The experiences of students while enrolled are strongly coupled to their later feelings about the institution. Graduates who had a rewarding undergraduate experience may feel more connected to their alma mater, become more involved, and contribute financially when able" (p. 229).

The most significant attitudinal variable associated with alumni association membership was alumni association perceptions. Greater levels of satisfaction with the alumni association are more likely to be members of alumni association. Graduates who were more involved with both university and alumni association events and programs were more likely to be members (Newman & Petrosko, 2011).

The student leaders may be more likely to give back to the university for many number of reasons. They may be more satisfied with their alma mater because they received honors or were able to have special opportunities that led to greater positive feelings and fonder memories than the average student. This higher level of satisfaction with their experiences might explain an increase in their motivation to give (Thomas & Smart, 2005).

An institution's alumni giving rate does not adequately measure graduates' satisfaction with their educational experience. Unfortunately, alumni giving has become a handy proxy that really only measures an institution's success at generating philanthropic dollars.

3. State of Affairs in India

Manjula Pooja Shroff, an entrepreneur and academician by profession, through an article shared that Indian universities are largely funded by tuition fees, whereas western universities are mostly funded by donation. For instance, only about 20% of Harvard expenditures are met by tuition fee collections while nearly 50% comes from donation. A significant amount of this donation comes from its alumni base.

Indians industrialists including Siddharth Yog, Anand Mahindra, Narayana Murthy, Ratan Tata, etc. continues to donate to western universities. It is not that donation to Indian universities is completely non-existent, but it is quite bleak compared to the amounts donated to foreign universities. Nandan Nilekani's donation of \$2.6 million to IIT, his alma mater, to build a new hostel wing is often spoken about.

According to Prof. B. M. Naik, Founder & Principal of SGSSIT (Nanded), "Indian institutes do not stand high in the world list mainly because they have not yet fully harnessed the creativity of alumni for uplifting institutional performance. Alumni are important stakeholders of college."

3.1 IIT Madras

As a step towards streamlining the alumni funding, the IIT Growth Fund was set up in January 2005 for deployment of generated funds towards infrastructure, research projects and scholarships in the institute. The eminent communication technologist-cum-entrepreneur and second richest Indian billionaire in the United States, Gururaj 'Desh' Deshpande and his wife Jaishree Deshpande, both illustrious products off the institution, built the Sharavathi Hostel block for the girl students. The four stories hostel accommodates over 400 girls today.

3.2 IIT Roorkee

Global Meet 2005 brought two milestones for its Alma Mater. One professorial chair worth Rupees 1 crore to IIT Roorkee from NEEPCO for advancement in the power sector studies and secondly a world class exposure on Broadband Technologies to IIT Roorkee students by Alcatel. '*Distinguished Alumni Award*' was instituted in the year 2001 with the conversion of University of Roorkee into IIT Roorkee to honour the progenitors of this institute who are excellence-at-par in varied fields and have contributed immensely for the promulgation of the interests of their country and Alma Mater.

3.3 Objectives

- To study the relationship between IT working professionals and their alma mater.
- To analyse the satisfaction level of IT working professionals with their alma mater.
- To examine the relationship between satisfaction level and giving behavior of IT working professionals with their alma mater.

3.4 Hypothesis

- H₀1:** There is no significant difference between male and female alumni with regard to satisfaction with their alma mater.
- H₀1a:** There is no significant difference between male and female alumni with regard to satisfaction with overall educational experience at their alma mater.
- H₀1b:** There is no significant difference between male and female alumni with regard to satisfaction with the efforts of alma mater to maintain contact with alumni after their graduation.
- H₀1c:** There is no significant difference between male and female alumni with regard to satisfaction with opportunities provided by their alma mater to work with current students and new graduates to help them be more successful.
- H₀1d:** There is no significant difference between male and female alumni with regard to satisfaction with the participation in activities to help alma mater's students and new graduates to help them be more successful.
- H₀1e:** There is no significant difference between male and female alumni with regard to satisfaction with opportunities provided by their alma mater to make suggestions about how to improve program and services.
- H₀1f:** There is no significant difference between male and female alumni with regard to satisfaction with preparation received at their alma mater for further study at another college or university.
- H₀1g:** There is no significant difference between male and female alumni with regard to satisfaction with preparation received at their alma mater for employment in the concerned field.
- H₀2:** There is significant and positive correlation between satisfaction and willingness for social giving of alumni of technical institutions.

4. Research Methodology

This paper attempts at answering the research questions through Literature review as well as administering survey questionnaire. Based on literature review study, a 19-item questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire had three parts, part a was purely focused on collecting demographic details, part b contained questions pertaining to satisfaction level of alumni with their alma mater regarding their overall educational experience; preparation received by them was excellent for their field of employment or for further studies; if alma mater has tried maintaining contact with them after their graduation; etc. and part c focussed on assessing the social giving behavior of alumni.

The questions were rated on Likert scale of five points ranging from 1 to 5 with 5 being the highest level of response (strongly agree) and 1 being the lowest (strongly disagree). Reliability of the questionnaire was tested to be Cronbach Alpha 0.84. According to Nunnally (1978, p. 245) the instruments used in basic research have reliability of about .70 or better.

Data was collected from two management institutions of Delhi/NCR-one private and other public institutions offering technical education. Survey was conducted during the alumni meet of the respective institutions. Out of 120 solicited participation numbers, total usable forms received were 109, signifying a response rate of 90%.

5. Data Analysis

The first section of the questionnaire collected the demographic information of the respondents such gender, age, employment status, year of graduation, etc. followed by items relating to alumni satisfaction.

6. Demographics

Among the respondents around 80% were male and rest were female working professionals. 99 working professionals were aged less than 33 years. Almost all working professionals have pursued full-time course at their alma mater.

7. Discussion

The analysis of the data indicates that a majority of the respondents have participated in the activities to help the students (including currently studying and fresh graduates) to be more successful ($m = 3.36$, $s.d. = 0.94$). On the level of satisfaction with respect to the opportunities being provided by alma mater to their alumni for giving suggestions about improvement of program and services being offered by the institution, majority of the respondents were found to satisfied ($m = 3.51$, $s.d. = 1.02$). Similar response was received for the opportunities being provided by alma mater to their alumni for working with current as well as fresh graduates for making them for successful ($m = 3.51$, $s.d. = 0.98$). Working professionals were found to be just satisfied with the efforts of their alma mater regarding the maintenance of contact with them ($m = 3.28$, $s.d. = 1.05$).

Level of satisfaction was below average with respect to the preparation the working professionals received at their alma mater either for further studies at other college or institution ($m = 2.90$, $s.d. = 0.88$) or for employment in their respective fields ($m = 2.59$, $s.d. = 0.93$). Working professionals were not very satisfied with the overall educational experience of at their alma mater ($m = 2.39$, $s.d. = 0.98$) (table 1).

Table 1. Satisfaction level of working professionals with their alma mater

Items	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Level of satisfaction with overall educational experience at my alma mater	109	1	5	2.39	0.98
Level of satisfaction with the efforts of alma mater to maintain contact with alumni after their graduation	109	1	5	3.28	1.05
Level of satisfaction with opportunities provided by alma mater to alumni to work with current students and new graduates to help them be more successful	109	1	5	3.51	0.98
Level of satisfaction of alumni with the participation in activities to help alma mater's students and new graduates to help them be more successful	109	1	5	3.36	0.94
Level of satisfaction with opportunities provided by alma mater to alumni to make suggestions about how to improve program and services	109	1	5	3.51	1.02
Level of satisfaction with preparation received by alumni at their alma mater for further study at another college or university	109	1	5	2.90	0.88
Level of satisfaction with preparation received by alumni at their alma mater for employment in the concerned field	109	1	5	2.59	0.93

No significant difference was found between male and female respondents with respect to overall educational experience they had at their alma mater ($t = 1.035$, $p < 0.05$), opportunities provided to them by their alma mater to work with current students and new graduates to help them be more successful ($t = 0.928$, $p < 0.05$) and also for opportunities provided by their alma mater make suggestions about how to improve program and services ($t = 1.315$, $p < 0.05$). In view of the same, hypotheses H_{01a} , H_{01c} and H_{01e} were accepted.

However, it was found that a significant difference exists in satisfaction level between male and female alumni with respect to the efforts of alma mater to maintain contact with them after their graduation. Male alumni were found to be more satisfied in the said parameter ($t = -1.995$, $m = 2.64$, $p < 0.05$). The reason could be that as compared to female, males are always more approachable. Female alumni also do not share their details on which they can be contacted. Therefore, male alumni are more reachable by alma mater as compared to female alumni. Hypothesis H_{01b} was rejected.

Same reflected in respect of the participation in activities to help alma mater's students and new graduates to help them be more successful, male alumni were found to be more satisfied ($t = -1.588$, $m = 2.45$, $p < 0.05$). Usually sometime after graduating, females get married and with family responsibilities on their shoulder, do not have much time to invest for such activities. As a result, male alumni indulge more in such activities resulting in higher level of satisfaction. Hypothesis H_{01d} was rejected.

Contrasting results were found with respect to the satisfaction level with regard to the preparation received by alumni at their alma mater for further study at another college or university ($t = 2.159$, $m = 3.90$, $p < 0.01$) and also for employment in the concerned field ($t = 2.928$, $m = 3.86$, $p < 0.01$), female alumni

were found to be more satisfied. The results concur with findings of Martin, Milne-Home, Barrett, Spalding, and Jones (2000), where females had reported greater satisfaction in employment preparation received at their alma mater. Females were found to be more satisfied with college than males (Pace, 1979 as mentioned in Pike, 1994).

Pike (1994) through his research found that work experiences were significantly related to alumni ratings of their college experiences. Specifically, alumni who were satisfied with their jobs are more likely to report being satisfied with their education experiences. The results of his research indicated that females were less satisfied with their pay than males. Compared to males, females were neither more dissatisfied with the types of work they were performing nor more likely to be looking for another job. Counter to expectation, dissatisfaction with pay had a more significant effect on ratings of college experiences for female alumni than for male alumni.

Whereas our findings suggest that female alumni were comparatively more satisfied with the preparation received at their alma mater for employment in concerned field. This can be attributed to the accommodating as well as emotional nature of females, wherein they are try to adjust to the opportunities being provided to them. It is also pertinent to mention that females easily form an emotional bond with their surroundings (including their alma mater). Therefore, hypotheses H_{01f} and H_{01g} were also rejected (table 2).

For the purpose of testing null- hypothesis and its sub-hypothesis that there exists a significant difference between male and female alumni with regard to level of satisfaction with their alma mater, Levene's t-test for equality of variances has been applied (table 3).

Table 2. Difference in level of satisfaction of male and female alumni

Items	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Level of satisfaction with overall educational experience at my alma mater	1	22	2.9091	0.75018	0.15994
	2	87	2.7126	0.80562	0.08637
Level of satisfaction with the efforts of alma mater to maintain contact with alumni after their graduation	1	22	2.2273	0.61193	0.13046
	2	87	2.6437	0.92732	0.09942
Level of satisfaction with opportunities provided by alma mater to alumni to work with current students and new graduates to help them be more successful	1	22	2.8182	0.79501	0.1695
	2	87	2.6322	0.85065	0.0912
Level of satisfaction of alumni with the participation in activities to help alma mater's students and new graduates to help them be more successful	1	22	2.0909	0.68376	0.14578
	2	87	2.4598	1.0321	0.11065
Level of satisfaction with opportunities provided by alma mater to alumni to make suggestions about how to improve program and services	1	22	3.5455	0.9625	0.20521
	2	87	3.2184	1.06121	0.11377
Level of satisfaction with preparation received by alumni at their alma mater for further study at another college or university	1	22	3.9091	0.68376	0.14578
	2	87	3.4138	1.01788	0.10913
Level of satisfaction with preparation received by alumni at their alma mater for employment in the concerned field	1	22	3.8636	0.6396	0.13636
	2	87	3.2299	0.96088	0.10302

where, 1= female and 2= male

Table 3. Difference in level of satisfaction of male and female alumni

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Level of satisfaction with overall educational experience at my alma mater	Equal variances assumed	0.395	0.531	1.035	107	0.303	0.19645	0.18973
	Equal variances not assumed			1.081	34.322	0.287	0.19645	0.18177
Level of satisfaction with the efforts of alma mater to maintain contact with alumni after their graduation	Equal variances assumed	8.466	0.004	-1.995	107	0.049	-0.4164	0.20868
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.539	48.48	0.014	-0.4164	0.16403
Level of satisfaction with opportunities provided by alma mater to alumni to work with current students and new graduates to help them be more successful	Equal variances assumed	1.34	0.25	0.928	107	0.356	0.186	0.20046
	Equal variances not assumed			0.966	34.219	0.341	0.186	0.19247
Level of satisfaction of alumni with the participation in activities to help alma mater's students and new graduates to help them be more successful	Equal variances assumed	6.291	0.014	-1.588	107	0.115	-0.3689	0.23234
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.015	48.257	0.049	-0.3689	0.18302
Level of satisfaction with opportunities provided by alma mater to alumni to make suggestions about how to improve program and services	Equal variances assumed	0.119	0.731	1.315	107	0.191	0.32706	0.2488
	Equal variances not assumed			1.394	35.086	0.172	0.32706	0.23464
Level of satisfaction with preparation received by alumni at their alma mater for further study at another college or university	Equal variances assumed	9.601	0.002	2.159	107	0.033	0.4953	0.22945
	Equal variances not assumed			2.72	47.489	0.009	0.4953	0.1821
Level of satisfaction with preparation received by alumni at their alma mater for employment in the concerned field	Equal variances assumed	8.028	0.006	2.928	107	0.004	0.63375	0.21641
	Equal variances not assumed			3.708	47.993	0.001	0.63375	0.1709

To determine whether there is a relationship between the satisfaction level and willingness for social giving behavior of alumni towards their alma mater, the Pearson moment correlation was used. The results show that there is a positive significant relationship between the two variables ($r = 0.348$; $p \leq 0.01$) (table 4). Whereas Wunnave and Lauze (2001) found that among the consistent financial donors, alumni of working in finance sector had the highest level of financial giving followed by occasional donors who work in personal service sector such hotel/restaurant. It appears that the sector in which alumni have an impact of their giving behavior because it impacts the financial status of the individual. Also the kind of work profile being taken by alumni influences the time schedule of the individual which he/she can offer to the alma mater. Hence, H_0 is accepted.

Table 4. Correlation between alumni satisfaction and willingness for social giving to alma mater

		Alumni Satisfaction	Willingness for social giving to alma mater
Alumni Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	.348**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	109	109
Willingness for social giving to alma mater	Pearson Correlation	.348**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	109	109

8. Conclusion

Alumni are vital to institutions of higher education. Whether they are volunteering their time on committees, participating at campus events, or giving financially, they are crucial to the survival of the institution. Alumni serve as ambassadors for the university to their communities and states. Visible alumni success (CEO's, corporate Vice-presidents, etc.) in their careers are often determining factors in recruiting other students to the university (Lawley, 2008).

Therefore, it is alma mater's need as well as responsibility to improve upon the relationship shared between the institution and alumni. In our study, working professionals were majorly satisfied with the opportunities being provided to them both for working with current students as well as fresh graduates and also giving suggestions for improving the services & programs offered by the alma mater.

But working professionals were not found to be satisfied with the overall educational experience at their alma mater. Based on

this study, this low level of satisfaction can be accounted to the preparation they received for pursuing further studies at another college/ institution and also to the preparation they received at their alma mater for their current employment. The dissatisfaction of working professionals with their current employment can be a reason for lower rating of the preparation received at their alma mater.

No significant difference was found between male and female respondents with respect to overall educational experience they had at their alma mater, opportunities provided to them by their alma mater to work with current students and new graduates to help them be more successful and also for opportunities provided by their alma mater make suggestions about how to improve program and services.

In contrast, male alumni were found to be more satisfied with respect to the efforts of alma mater to maintain contact with them after their graduation and participation in activities to help alma mater's students and new graduates to help them be more successful. Whereas female alumni were found to be more satisfied with regard to the preparation received at their alma mater for further study at another college or university and also for employment in the concerned field.

We found a significant positive relationship while assessing the relationship between alumni satisfaction level and their willingness for social giving behavior towards their alma mater. Thus, implying that level of satisfaction influences the giving behavior of alumni. Therefore, alma mater can enhance the giving behavior of alumni by improving their under-graduation experience which in turn will improve their level of satisfaction.

9. Limitations

Despite the researcher's all efforts, this study too has few limitations. First, findings of this study cannot be generalized since it has been conducted within a sample of 109 only. The study can be done with bigger sample size and also including various other variables such as infrastructural facilities, faculty support, etc. Second, the sample were all IT working professionals, further research can include alumni from other disciplines also such as management, sciences, etc.

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