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Factors Influencing Career Choice in Management Students

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ABSTRACT: The issue of career selection among the management students is based on various factors that influence the decision and make the students confused and indecisive, including parental requirements, peer-pressure, personal interest, and awareness of the specialization paths. Poor career counseling may lead to students engaging in careers or specializations that they are not good in which job satisfaction is low and they produce less. The objective of the study is to analyse factors influencing career choice in management students. The sample of the study is 120. Descriptive research design and convenience sampling method has been used. Questionnaire has been used as a primary data. Simple percentage analysis, chi-square analysis and correlation statistical tools have been applied to reach the findings of the study. It is found that there is some significant relationship between parental influence and choice of specialization and there is positive relationship between this personal interest/passion and choice of specialization. It is suggested that Organizations ought to offer counseling trainings that focus on the alignment of the career options to individual capabilities and organizational demands. Organizations are advised to provide the employees with the chance to pursue the roles that suit them and their interests. It is concluded that Career decisions are not made only on the impact of the outside factors, but also due to inner desires and realization of opportunities. Choosing specialization is highly connected with the long-term career and employment opportunities. When students put these aspects into consideration, they will be better placed in making good and rewarding career choices.

KEYWORD: career choice, management students, parental guidance, career planning

I. INTRODUCTION

Career choice of management students is a burning field of study amid competitive academic and professional setting. As the management streams offered by colleges and universities become more differentiated i.e., Finance, Marketing, Human Resource Management and Operations, students have a variety of choices that can determine their future career paths. These decisions are highly affected by various factors such as guidance of parents, personal interest, peer influence as well as awareness of the available specialization options. It is clarified that the knowledge of these factors can be valuable to both students and career counselors to make informed career choices and give specific guidance and assistance to students. Over the past few years, studies have emphasized the fact that career choices are shaped by an interplay of social, personal, as well as environmental factors. Although the role of parental influence, peer influence and individual interests in the selection of the career has been examined in studies; there exist little research addressing the contribution of these determinants to the selection of the specialization among the management students. Besides, the interplay between these factors and their long-term commitment and preferred role among students is understudied.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To test how parental guidance and expectations affect career choices of management students.
- To estimate how personal interest and passion influence the career choice of management students.
- To determine the impact of friends and social groups on career decision of management students.

➤ To determine the impact of the choice made by students when choosing a management specialization on their general career planning and decision making.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Wei, 2025) carried out an extensive literature review in order to learn the impact of both parenting styles of parents on the career exploration and decision making process of university students employing recent both empirical and theoretical studies. The aim of the research was to conduct a literature synthesis in the last five years to explain how various parenting styles influence career exploration behaviour and self efficacy of students. The results showed authoritative parenting is more likely to increase psychological capital and self efficacy in career decision making failure to support proactive career exploration and clarity of career plans in overly controlling and permissive styles. The review has proposed that education institutions should customize career advice by family situations and that the future study should incorporate cultural and socioeconomic aspects. To sum up, parental style is important to the career exploration process of university students whose implications to counselling and policy are support of balanced autonomy and exploration.

(Muneeba Shakil et al., 2025) examined the contribution of parental influence and social media, as well as, personal choice to shaping the career choice of the youth, and directly related to the personal interest and parental influence on the choice of profession. The aim was to investigate the role played by these factors in the choice of career among the young college students. Findings indicated that parental occupation, and influence were one of the strongest predictors of occupation choice, media influence and personal preferences also influenced occupation choice. It was proposed in the study to reinforce the professional career counselling services in helping the students make well-informed decisions in accordance to their personal interests and to take into consideration the gender differences in influence patterns. Conclusively, though parental influence is still important, there is a personal interest of youths in career choice as well as other sources of information in the society such as media.

(Joshi & Rawat, 2025) studied the factors impacting career selection in undergraduate students in Pokhara University in Kathmandu, with the family influence, personal interest, future employment, financial outcome, and peer influence being the scope of the study. This was aimed at establishing the relationship between these factors and the career decision processes of students. The results have shown that family influence, personal interest, and peer influence had a positive impact on career choice of students, and future job opportunities turned out to be the most important predictor. The authors proposed that the universities need to incorporate career planning resources which would take into consideration the societal as well as the individual aspirations. To sum up, knowing such multivariate effects could lead teachers and policy makers to enable students to take career choices that help them to balance extrinsic and intrinsic motivators.

IV. METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objectives of data collection, 120 management students studied at undergraduate and postgraduate management courses in colleges and universities in Chennai were used to get the data required in this study. To make sure that various specializations like the Finance, Marketing, Human Resource Management and Operations were represented fairly, the respondents were chosen via random sampling method.

This survey was done by retaining a well-crafted structured questionnaire encompassing both the close-ended and the Likert-scale questions in order to obtain quantitative data and a few open-ended questions in order to obtain qualitative data. Data investigated were tested with the help of statistical tools like correlation analysis, chi-square test and simple percentage analysis to reveal the correlation between factors that determine career choice and the preferences students have of their specializations. In the case of the study, both primary and secondary data were employed.

Primary data were collected directly amongst the students using the standardized questionnaire with the secondary data being collected in academic journals, websites and case studies associated with career choice and management education.

V. RESULTS

Data analysis and interpretation

Table1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age (years) of the respondents	Below 20	57	47.5
	20 – 21	21	17.5
	22 – 23	17	14.2
	24 – 25	15	12.5
	Above 25	10	8.3
Current Academic Level	Undergraduate (BBA/BMS)	42	35.0
	Postgraduate (MBA/PGDM)	16	13.3
	Diploma/PG Diploma	26	21.7
	Integrated Management Program	25	20.8
	Others	11	9.2
Type of Institution (Currently enrolled)	Private College	58	48.3
	Government College	32	26.7
	University	30	25.0
Preferred Sector after Graduation	Corporate/Private Company	18	15.0
	Government/Public Sector	53	44.2
	Start-up	16	13.3
	Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)	12	10.0
	Entrepreneurial / Self-Employment	21	17.5

Source: Primary data

The table above demonstrates that 47.5% of the respondents said that below 20, 35.0% of the respondents said that undergraduate as their current academic level, 48.3% of the respondents said that private college as their currently enrolled type of institution and 44.2% of the respondents said that government/public sector as their preferred sector after graduation.

Table2. Parental Influence

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Parental advice is considered when choosing a management specialization.	35(29.2%)	49(40.8%)	11(9.2%)	14(11.7%)	11(9.2%)
Pressure from parents affects career path decisions.	45(37.5%)	27(22.5%)	20(16.7%)	17(14.2%)	11(9.2%)
Parents' professional background impacts career choices.	16(13.3%)	10 (8.3%)	24 (20.0%)	55(45.8%)	15(12.5%)
Career options are discussed with parents before final decisions.	53 (44.2%)	23(19.2%)	12 (10.0%)	18(15.0%)	14 (11.7%)
Career paths are chosen to meet parental approval.	19 (15.8%)	38(31.7%)	25 (20.8%)	19(15.8%)	19 (15.8%)

Source: Primary data

The table above demonstrates that 40.8% of the respondents are agree towards parental advice is considered when choosing a management specialization, 37.5% of the respondents are strongly agree towards pressure from parents affects career path decisions, 45.8% of the respondents are disagree towards parents' professional background impacts career choices, 44.2% of the respondents are strongly agree towards career options are discussed with parents before final decisions and 31.7% of the respondents are agree towards career paths are chosen to meet parental approval.

Tabl 3. Personal Interest/Passion

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Roles are preferred that align with skills and hobbies.	17 (14.2%)	25 (20.8%)	26 (21.7%)	13 (10.8%)	39 (32.5%)
Interest in a management specialization motivates career decisions.	23 (19.2%)	45 (37.5%)	16 (13.3%)	20 (16.7%)	16 (13.3%)
Personal satisfaction is prioritized over salary in career choice.	47 (39.2%)	27 (22.5%)	12 (10.0%)	19 (15.8%)	15 (12.5%)
Exploration of areas of management is guided by interest levels.	24 (20.0%)	39 (32.5%)	31 (25.8%)	13 (10.8%)	13 (10.8%)
Passion is prioritized over external expectations in career selection.	39 (32.5%)	28 (23.3%)	22 (18.3%)	13 (10.8%)	18 (15.0%)

Source: Primary data

The table above demonstrates that 32.5% of the respondents are strongly disagree towards roles are preferred that align with skills and hobbies, 37.5% of the respondents are agree towards interest in a management specialization motivates career decisions, 39.2% of the respondents are strongly agree towards personal satisfaction is prioritized over salary in career choice, 32.5% of the respondents are agree towards Exploration of areas of management is guided by interest levels and 32.5% of the respondents are strongly agree towards exploration of areas of management is guided by interest levels.

Table4. Choice of Specialization

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Future job opportunities influence specialization choice.	17 (14.2%)	54(45.0%)	16(13.3%)	22(18.3%)	11 (9.2%)
Specializations are selected based on alignment with long-term career goals.	15 (12.5%)	22(18.3%)	51(42.5%)	18(15.0%)	14(11.7%)
Curriculum and skills offered in a specialization affect the decision.	31 (25.8%)	34(28.3%)	29(24.2%)	11 (9.2%)	15(12.5%)
Specialization selection is based on interest rather than popularity.	42 (35.0%)	21(17.5%)	28(23.3%)	18(15.0%)	11 (9.2%)
Industry demand and growth prospects guide specialization choice.	25 (20.8%)	40(33.3%)	10 (8.3%)	23(19.2%)	22(18.3%)

Source: Primary data

The table above demonstrates that 45.0% of the respondents are agree towards Future job opportunities influence specialization choice, 42.5% the respondents are neither agree nor disagree towards

Specializations are selected based on alignment with long-term career goals, 28.3% of the respondents are agree towards Curriculum and skills offered in a specialization affect the decision, 35.0% of the respondents are strongly agree towards

Specialization selection is based on interest rather than popularity and 33.3% of the respondents are agree towards Industry demand and growth prospects guide specialization choice.

Chi-Square Analysis- Relationship Between Parental Influence and Choice of Specialization

Null hypothesis (Ho):

There is no significant relationship between Parental Influence and Choice of Specialization.

Alternative hypothesis (H1):

There is some significant relationship between Parental Influence and Choice of Specialization.

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	64.671 ^a	32	.001
Likelihood Ratio	77.825	32	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.028	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	120		

a. 47 cells (92.2%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .25.

Interpretation:

It may be deduced from the preceding table that 0.001 is the P value and that at the 5% (0.05) level of significance, it is noteworthy. The anticipated count is at least 0.25. Consequently, the alternative theory is acknowledged and it is found that there is some significant relationship between Parental Influence and Choice of Specialization.

Correlation Analysis- Relationship Between Personal Interest/Passion and Choice of Specialization

Correlations

		Personal Interest/Passion	Choice of Specialization
Personal Interest/Passion	Pearson Correlation	1	.365**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
Choice of Specialization	Pearson Correlation	.365**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation:

According to the table above, of the 120 responses, co-efficient of correlation between personal interest/passion and choice of specialization is 0. 365. it is below 1. so there is positive relationship between this personal interest/passion and choice of specialization.

VI. DISCUSSION

- ❖ Firms would want to consider seeking family viewpoints when implementing career guidance programs to help in developing employees.
- ❖ People should also be offered mentoring programmes by organizations, which are aimed at balancing external demands with individual career aspirations of students or new hires.
- ❖ The influence of family professionals in developing career development workshops should be considered by companies.
- ❖ Organizations should be able to establish resources that can make informed decisions and also consider external recommendations.
- ❖ Organizations ought to offer counseling trainings that focus on the alignment of the career options to individual capabilities and organizational demands.
- ❖ Organizations are advised to provide the employees with the chance to pursue the roles that suit them and their interests.

- ❖ Firms must develop learning and development systems that foster interest of the employees in specialization.
- ❖ Organization must be concerned with designing jobs which make them more satisfying and meaningful to work in, rather than just in terms of pay.

VII. CONCLUSION

One of the findings is that the parental pressure, individual interest, peer pressure, and major selection play a significant role in determining the career choice of management students. Personal interest and passion seem to be the most influential factor, where the essentiality of matching career choice with personal capabilities and driving forces. Parents and peer influence are also effective but they are most useful when they are combined with individual preferences. Career decisions are not made only on the impact of the outside factors, but also due to inner desires and realization of opportunities. Choosing specialization is highly connected with the long-term career and employment opportunities. When students put these aspects into consideration, they will be better placed in making good and rewarding career choices. The research brings out the necessity of formal mentorship and career-related advice by institutions of learning. Decision-making can be improved by exposure to various management flows and industry knowledge. The combination of these factors can be understood to guide the student career choices to match the needs of the organization. All in all, it can be concluded that the need to support informed career decisions can help in personal development as well as in enhanced organizational performance.

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