



Career Choice and influencing factors: A study among Undergraduate Students in Manipur

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Abstract

The choice of career is a serious problem among Undergraduate students. One has to make due career planning and exhaustive research before making a career choice to adjust to the evolving socio-economic demands of the generation. Usually career choices are made with the support of peer groups, class teachers, a few with career Counsellors and with the aspirations of parents or to parents favour. The present study conducted in Imphal -west Manipur is to identify the factors influencing career preferences among undergraduate students. The study revealed that outcome expectancies, individual variants such as gender, learning, experiences, social institution factors and personal interest influence students' career choices. The study suggested that career counsellors, parents, teachers and all other persons who guide students in their career choice should help them determine the most suitable careers based on the student's potential and interests.

Keywords: career choice, influencing factors, career counsellor, capability, Interest.

Introduction

Choosing a career is a delicate issue that requires caution and serious considerations. The kind of career the students pursue can affect their lives in many ways. Individuals' desires for careers are different; many want high incomes, others want adventure, and others want to serve people to make the world better. Regardless of age, the choice of career or desire is an important question for everybody. This decision will impart them throughout their lives. The essence of who the student is will revolve around what the students want to do with their- lifelong work.

Students in undergraduate studies are always worried about what they will do in their lives and the kind of adults they will become. They are concerned about early entry into the occupational world and finding productive and rewarding places in our rapidly fast-changing



societies where wages for employment are unlikely to be available on a scale sufficient to absorb more than a small fraction of the young people when they do arrive at the labour market. How today's young people meet tomorrow's problems will depend upon their success in planning for that tomorrow. Planning for tomorrow is primarily the responsibility of the parents, teachers and the counsellor. Students need a general orientation into the world of work through the curriculum. Therefore, career planning and analysing the factors that influence career decisions are crucial to facilitate students' improvement in the area they are interested in and that will be used in their future professional lives.

The student's support systems include parents, relatives, siblings, peers, teachers and counsellors, which may be the most important factor in social institutions. There are many opportunities or paths to be explored by Under-Graduate students. They should be thinking about career decisions in their senior year of undergraduate studies. It should become apparent then that the students will have to do something. Students need to experience a sense of accomplishment – not only in academic areas but also in activities. They must help realise that success does not come just from daydreaming, but from combining a vision with appropriate and necessary actions. They need to imagine what kind of career can give their life the most amount of satisfaction. It is not only to work to earn a living but to make them realize the importance of human identity in the scope and diversity of every individual's accomplishments on a daily basis; the students should identify their own decision-making patterns and evaluate their effectiveness.

A lack of awareness about skills, values and interests can cause career problems. Career aptitude tests and career counselling can help a person determine the type of career he should pursue. At the same time, he can pursue the advanced education he needs to make his dream career a reality. A relatively stable self-concept should emerge in late adolescence to guide career choice and adjustment.

Multiple factors influencing career choice include globalisation, socialisation, role models, social support and financial resources. According to Hewitt.J. (2010) factors influencing career choice can either be “intrinsic or extrinsic or both”. He further states that most people are influenced by careers that a parent favours; others follow the careers that their educational choices



have opened for them; some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make them, while others choose careers that give high income.

There should be a well-thought-out link between education and career progression. The current situation in Manipur indicates that Undergraduate students who do not determine their future career orientation before graduation are beginning to serve in an unplanned way after graduation, and thereby resulting in a loss of interest, low productivity at work, even failure if they choose a profession that is incompatible with their abilities and help them to develop accurate perceptions of professions and be able to make decisions about their career choice. The study findings may enhance recruitment strategies, job satisfaction, retention, and productivity. The present study was conducted to identify the factors influencing career choice among Undergraduate students in the Imphal West District of Manipur.

Study design and specific objections

The study adopted a descriptive research design while in the process of finding out the influential factors of career choices among Undergraduate students with special reference to Imphal West District in Manipur. The study systematically analysed the demographic profile of the respondents, identifying the influence of educational institutions or career choices among undergraduate students on career choice. An in-depth study was conducted to determine the impact on one's interest in career choices.

Sample size and sampling

The minimum sample size was recommended as it was difficult to study the entire undergraduate students of the study area; therefore, 200 samples were taken to represent the undergraduate students in Imphal West District being selected through the probability sampling method.

Data collection

The questionnaire was adopted after the pre-test was conducted to ascertain suitability and adaptability. The questionnaire was modelled to fit the requirement. A five-point Likert Scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree was used to rate the responses of the second part and third parts of the questionnaire. The questionnaire covered four parts: the first part explored

the demographic profile of respondents; the second part investigated the influence of educational institutions on career choice among undergraduate students; the third part investigated the influence of one's personality on career choice among undergraduate students; the fourth part consisting of five questions was responded with 'Yes' and 'No' opinion to access the impact on one's personal interest of the career choice.

The sources are both primary and secondary data for a better understanding and wide coverage of the area under study. The study was conducted in a similar social background and environment. Hence, the generalisation of the findings may be appropriate, though the number of respondents was limited to 200 students only.

Data Analysis and Coding

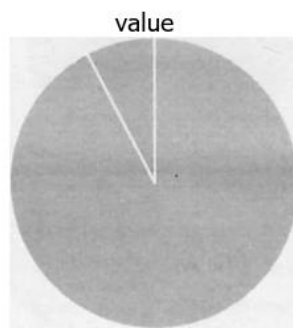
The questionnaires are edited, tabulated, graphically presented, analysed and interpreted based on the study's objectives and hypothesis to be tested.

Results and Discussion

1. Demographic profile of the Respondents:

Figure no. 1: Age of Respondent

Age of the Respondent



• 18-21 • 22-25

Age is a period of human life, measured by years from birth, usually marked by a certain stage or degree of mental or physical development and involving legal responsibility and capacity.

The above figure 1 presents the age wise distribution of the respondents. It is seen that

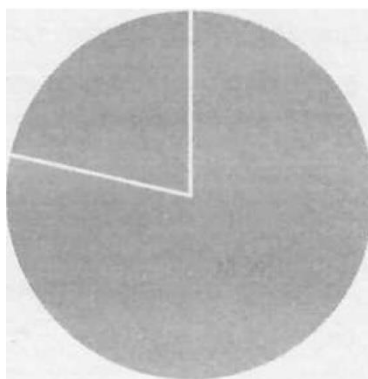
majority of the respondents 92.3% fall in age group of 18-21, while only 707% fall in the age group of 22-25. Age determines the influence of the career. The analysis indicates that the students who study in the college are very young aged, 18-21 age.

Table no. 2: Influence of Educational Institutions on career choice

SI. No.	Career choice base on person interest	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	110	55%
2	Agree	70	35%
3	Undecided	5	2.5%
4	Disagree	15	7.5%
	Total	200	100%

The above table shows that majority of the students who study in the College strongly agreed that career choice is based on each individual’s interest which is shown to be 55% and 35 % of the College students agree that career choice can be based on personal interest, 2.5 % are undecided and 7.5 % of the responded disagree with the point under investigation.

Figure no. 2:Academic ability determines the career choice
Academic ability determines the career choice



• Yes • No

Academic ability is the ability of a person to do well in academics. The above pie diagram indicates that a % of the respondents, 78.5%, agree that academic ability determines career choice, while only 21.5% disagree with this comment. Therefore, the majority of students agree with the comment that academic ability determines career choice.



Table no. 2:Influence of peers in career choice

SI. No.	Influence of peer on career choice	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	21	10.5%
2	Agree	132	66%
3	Undecided	21	10.5%
4	Disagree	24	12%
	Total	200	100%

The above table indicates that 10.8% of college students strongly agreed that peers influenced career choice whereas 66.2% agreed with the statement. The analysis leads us to understand that most respondents agreed to the statement.

Table no. 3:Counsellors influence the career choice

SI. No.	Counsellors influence the career choice	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	12	6.2%
2	Agree	70	35.4%
3	Undecided	37	18.5%
4	Disagree	73	36.5%
5	Strongly disagree	6	3.1%
	Total	200	100%

The analysis indicates that majority of the students disagreed with the investigation that counsellors influenced the students in choosing a career.

Table no.4: Teachers' influence in career choice

SI. No.	Teacher influence in career choice	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	21.6	10.8%
2	Agree	107	53.8%
3	Undecided	18	9.2%
4	Disagree	40	20.0%
5	Strongly disagree	12	6.2%
	Total	200	100%

The above analysis reveals that the majority of the students feel that a teacher's guidance greatly



influences in choosing the right career for them. This may be because of the teachers' knowledge of their students, which enables them to give proper guidance.

Table no. 5: Parents have a great influence in career choice

SI. No.	Parents have a great influence in career choice	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	64	32.3%
2	Agree	92	46.2%
3	Undecided	12	6.2%
4	Disagree	18	9.2%
5	Strongly disagree	12	6.2%
	Total	200	100%

Parents have a great influence in the choice of a career.

Table no. 6: Money is an issue in choosing a career

SI.No.	Money is an issue choosing a career.	Frequency	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	33	16.9%
2	Agree	95	47.7%
3	Undecided	12	6.2%
4	Disagree	43	21.5%
5	Strongly disagree	15	7.7%
	Total	200	100%

The above table shows that money is indeed an issue in choosing a career. In this regard 31% of the students agreed that money is a concern in the process of choosing a career.



Discussion and Conclusion

The study outcomes revealed that students' career choices are influenced by various factors, including outcome expectancies, individual variants, learning experience, social institutions and personal interest. Outcome expectancy is among the most influential factors in students' career choices. In this issue, family members greatly influence their children's career choices, and peers and teachers also influence the students' career choices to a large degree. Above all, the teacher's knowledge of the student's abilities and potential will assist them in guiding the students towards an appropriate career and profession.

The study indicates that money is also an important cause for concerns in choosing a career. This issue is supported by 47.7% of the respondents. Students agreed that their academic ability determines the choice of their career. This was accepted by 78.5% of the respondents. Generally, most students are influenced by teachers and parents when choosing their careers. So, parents should be encouraged not to force their children into any particular career. Parental guidance and support will enable them to make wiser career choices. Teachers can identify their favourite subjects based on strengths and analyse whether these subjects can generate a job for the students.

Therefore, issues related to career choice should be dealt with; if not, the problem of unemployment will continue. Career choice is important to students and should be done with care, considering the different factors that play an important role for the students while choosing an appropriate job. The career counsellors and all other persons who guide the students in their career choice should help students determine the most suitable career based on their ability, capability and interests. They should ensure that they are well informed so that accurate information is provided and the students will make the right choice. The career of students can be based on their interests, attitudes, aptitudes, goals, commitment, and skills.

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