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Effect of Family Influence, Personal Interest and Economic Considerations on Career Choice amongst Undergraduate Students in Higher Educational Institutions of Vehari, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

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Correspondence: shoaib.raza.rs@gmail.com This study examined the effect of family influence, personal interest, and economic considerations in career choice amongst undergraduate students. The present study used quantitative research design. Target population was undergraduate students of higher educational institutions in Vehari, Pakistan. Cross-sectional data was used in this study. For data collection simple random sampling technique was used. The data was collected through structured questionnaire. The descriptive, demographic, reliability, correlation, and multiple regression analyses were applied to find answer to research questions. The results of regression analysis showed that the family influence, personal interest and economic considerations exercised big influence on the career choice of students. The Limitations of the study, suggestion for the future study, theoretical and practical implications were also discussed in this study.

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Career choice has become an important aspect of an individual's life because it determines the blueprint which is played by the individual in the future. Recent decades, students had a problem in choosing their career when they finish their studies. Pakistani fresh graduate students have difficulties in getting the right job after graduating. In addition, they need to

compete with working experience. So, the unemployment rate becomes higher from years to years due to this issue. Thus, career choice is one of many choices that students would make in formative their potential strategy. This decision will pass on all over their lives.

The education gives young people a proper knowledge, a realistic perspective and enables them to plan their future career in a most suitable manner. Likewise, if choosing a right career should be made earlier, there will be no regret in the future. Having the right career can provide satisfaction to a person. On the other hand, choosing the wrong career can make a person feel bored. In other words, it can be a worse option that can ruin the person's future. Therefore, it is important for a person to have a lot of consideration about career choice.

Some students of university consider their future as a fantastic adventure. Among many believe that they would be able to work in the market upon completion of their study as they have planned to become pilots, professors, doctors, accountants, IT expert, lawyers and etc. The career choice has a significant impact on the life of any person because if they fail to choose they fail to get a job.

Most of the studies examined the factors influencing career choices of undergraduate students identified some related factors such as socio economic, educational and cultural background (Noreen & Khalid, 2012). Recognizing these factors would give guardians, teachers, and industry a thought as to where students put the greater part of their trust in the profession choice process. As indicated by Sarwar and Azmat (2013), starting a career is a defining moment of a person's life which is chosen through earlier influencing factors.

The world is facing a serious crisis due to competitions, unemployment rate of the educated youths, self-fulfillment and income. On a daily basis, hundreds and thousands of children are asked the question: "What do you want to be when you grow up?" those days, our dreams about future careers were naturally very conceptual and general. Children frequently speak about professions in their environment such as their parents' professions, dream jobs or socially satisfactory and sexual orientation occupations.

There are many reasons students choose their work fields. They think that having higher education can give them big opportunities to be in the job fields they want. There are some majors that get higher attention such as medical, engineering, business, agriculture and etc. This is because of high opportunities, good salary, and the prestige of that job. To fulfill this, some higher education institutions are offering majors as not only to teach the students the knowledge but also help them progress in their career. In addition, career choice is a standout amongst the hugest decisions that students make in choosing future arrangements. This choice will influence them all through their lives. The center of the students' character pivots around what the students need to do with their long lasting work.

Students' career choice is a constant issue in the present-day world. Finding the right job by most undergraduate students in Pakistan is a serious issue. It is important to study the factors which influence students in career choice. There are a limited number of studies examining career choice in the context of Pakistan (Abbasi & Sarwat, 2014). Therefore, this study investigates the role of family influence, personal interest, and economic considerations in association with Career choice.

In Pakistan, most of the students make their career choice without having any systematic planning about a particular career. According to Ahmed, Sharif, and Ahmad (2017), if the

educated population of Pakistan are not able to make right career choices, then no doubt the country would not be able to develop in such difficult and dynamic environment. According to Boon and Illias (2011), there are varieties of styles in choosing a career practiced by the students such as there are students who do not have extensive knowledge about the scope career due to lack of knowledge and ignorance of career. This condition causes them to choose a career based on what have been done by family members or what is seen outwardly by the scope of the environment.

The researcher did not find any study discussed career choice as a separate topic in Vehari, where students face a problem in making career decisions. According to related literature, the factors such as family influence, personal interest, and economic considerations are assumed to influence students in choosing their career. This study will help students understand and identify these factors that influence their career choice. The novelty of this study in Vehari, is a need to have an empirical understanding of the factors that influence career decisions of these undergraduates.

Career Choice

The word career has been originated from French and Latin language. It is defined by Geçikli (2002) as the professional, marketable or business activity that an individual may adopt during his or her study life or till the death. A career is also a blueprint of job of a individual's life (Latif, Aziz, & Ahmed, 2016). Career choice can be defined as a process that describes the choices that a person makes when selecting a particular career (Kolawole, Osundina, James, & Abolaji, 2012). Brown (2004) asserted that the career choice must be defined as early as in the school and the tertiary institution level. The career as IT professionals, Professors, medical doctors depends on the level of education. Career selection is very essential for any person. It is a process of choosing an occupation which directs future life (Zaidi & Iqbal, 2012). According to Maina (2013), career choice is the selection of a course of study which leads to a specific profession according to one's interest, passion and ability as influenced by factors such as parental factors, peers, and role model. Career selection has become more difficult in 21st century that plays a major role in shaping personal choices (Saleem, Mian, Saleem, & Rao, 2014).

A career decision or career choice is a mind-boggling wonder which should be understood by investigating career decision or choice. Each should be first seen as an individual term for understanding the meaning. There are numerous studies related to the career as the central themes (Goffman, 1968; Hughes, 1937). The glossary meaning of decision is "seen as a willful demonstration of choosing or isolating one thing from the other". It is also shown as a determination of the human brain to favour one thing and reject all others (Webster's Dictionary, 1998). Career choice, therefore, requires giving priority to one occupation over another.

In Pakistan, there is a debate over career choice like other developing countries. There is a myth about such societies that the students rely only on their parents' education in choosing future career. This confidence is acknowledged because of the constrained financing open doors for the students in advanced education. The parents as sole financers are expected to have real effect on the students' decision in higher examinations and in career decision. The

degree of the students' close to career decision and association in career change should coordinate precisely to their necessities, not overlooking the dynamic workplace which can make turmoil in the profession advance (Amundson, 1984). Career decision is an exceptionally noteworthy and basic lifetime choice for any students and additionally for their folks. Their career choice is reliant on their parents' area, personal interests, companions' proposals and teachers' recommendation (Saleem et al., 2014).

Family Influence and Career Choice

The influence of the parents on career choice among undergraduates is big decision from the parents to the students. Parents play a significant role in this case as they pressure career choice of their children in many ways such as direct inheritance and the condition of apprenticeship or role model. The results of different studies indicated that parents' profession, their knowledge and income level on various professional areas, the norms, beliefs, information about modern occupations, spotlight to local and international job market, and the skills they acquire can affect children of their career selection (Saleem et al., 2014). Additionally, Parents' influence to certain professions and children' economic dependency on them have also limited children to comply their parents' choices (Jodl, Michael, Malanchuk, Jacquelynne, Eccles, & Sameroff, 2001). Parents want their children to have a secured and luxury career. As parents wish success for their children, they also become depress if their children choose a wrong career. That is why parents do their best to find a proper career for their children.

Parents always wish for their youngsters to have a secure future and their children must gain a decent compensation and a consistent employment. In order to accomplish this, the family frequently feels that their children must get the degree from a well-known college or university. This makes families push their children to get admission into a good school, so that it effects after school education and making the good career (Napompech, 2011).

Support and sponsorship from parents is an important factor which influence their children in career choices. The adolescents are also affected by dreams or expectations of their parents. Guay, Senecal, Gauthier, and Fernet (2003) found that the acceptance of parental authority is greater in the Asian culture. They claimed that there is significant relationship between parental influence and career choice. Peng and Wright (1994) mentioned that Asian society value smooth and harmonious relationship rather than individual self- actualization. However, due to the strong emphasis on perceived behavior, some advice from parents lead their children to choose a career that mismatch their personality.

H₁: There is significant and positive relationship between family influence and career choice.

Personal Interest and Career Choice

Personal interest refers to the students' personal interest in their chosen professions (Liaw, Wu, Lopez, Chow, Lim, Holroyd, & Wang, 2017). According to Holland's theory of "Career Typology," individuals choose career environments that best fit their personality and interest (Holland, 1966). Personal interests are learned from parents, in school, from friends, and from your life-long experiences. Interest plays very important role in motivating people to do the

right things that they like. A very strong and motivating interest in anything will boost to do it whole heartedly. Studies done in many countries and in different cultures came up with different results; for example, personality types and interest is a factor that impacts career choices made by the students in Kenya (Ahmed et al., 2017).

Ahmed (2014) and AlMiskry, Bakar, and Mohamed (2009) in their research article gave great importance to the interest of students in making choice of their career. They noted that interest in a career is according to the pattern of likes and dislikes of students. The indifference in activities related to career and occupation predicts the career choice among students. Tekke, Ghani, and Kurt (2015) discuss different stages in behaviour change and the manner of thinking of an individual while picking a career. A study was conducted in Sri Lanka on personal factors influencing career choice among business students (Anojan & Nimalathasan, 2013). The sample size was 103 students and a survey method was used for data collection. The findings indicated that personal factors are the greatest influential factor in comparison to their family, professional, and market oriented factors and factors related to university.

When people choose careers, they should consider their personal interests because: 1) People would do better in the field that interests them; 2) People who choose careers which match their personal interests are usually successful; and 3) People could get greater satisfaction and happiness when working in the field of interest. For instance, person who is interested in communication may be a politician or teacher, and he or she may not like to be a mechanic or chemist. According to the above discussions, the second hypothesis is as follows:

H₂: There is significant and positive relationship between personal interest and career choice.

Economic Considerations and Career Choice

Economic circumstances refer to the situation in the local economy in which individuals are going to seek their careers (Meddour, Abdo, Majid, Auf, & Aman, 2016). It is true that the country's economic growth is linked with the growth in the employment rates and increased spending capacity of people. When business grows, there are several extensions and more openings for work. This naturally attracts students to those fields. They see a great potential of their life growth and a steady income. This fact is in agreement with other research studies that show how students look for a career with high wages and economic stability and therefore choose the most relevant major in their undergraduate studies (Fizer, 2013).

Many people desire to adopt the career that could provide them sound foundation for better standard of living (Cavus, Geri, &\Turgunbayeva, 2015). A study conducted in South Africa, where demographic culture was totally different, revealed that the economic factors affect career choices of students (Abrahams, Jano, & van Lill, 2015). Job security and compensation benefits are economic considerations that appeal people to careers in the right way, and it is shown that people are happy with this part of the job. On the other hand, due to the absence of right guidance, students often fail to get the right picture of today's economy (Sarwar & Azmat, 2013).

There are also a few studies in Nigeria (Awujo, 2007; Ogunrinola, 2011; Onijigin, 2009) completed on secondary school students in various parts of Nigerian States. Each study had different findings but almost all respondents regarded monetary advantages as a primary factor

in making a career decision. These studies also revealed an important socio-economic factor, i.e., the family income and family needs as a critical factor determine a career chosen by a secondary school student in Nigeria. For instance, Onijigin (2009) stated that the motivation of an individual to get into a career is an economic reason because the employment will give him and his family adequate resources and monetary compensation to meet the social and economic needs. Therefore, the last hypothesis is to be tested as follows:

H₃: There is significant and positive relationship between economic considerations and career choice.

Underpinning Theory

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) (Lent, 2005; Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2002) firmly bound to the self-efficacy theory of Bandura (1977), which suggests a mutual influence of the interaction among public and nature. It offers three models of career development such as (1) development of academic and professional interests, (2) how individuals make choice of career and education, (3) career achievement and stability in education. Moreover, SCCT exhibited that bargains in individual interests are required in the career decision process because of logical unconstrained to the individual (e.g., social convictions, get less of support, social burden). This theory proposes that the career objectives are a function of career-related beliefs, potential result, and interests (Arévalo Avalos & Flores, 2016). The social cognitive career theory (SCCT) (Lent et al., 1994, 2002) is used as a supporting theoretical model in the present research.

Research Framework

In this study there are three independent variables and one dependent variable. The dependent variable is career choice of undergraduate students which rely on independent variables which consist of three factors that influence the undergraduate student's career choice namely family influence, personal interest and economic considerations. These variables are illustrated in Figure 1.

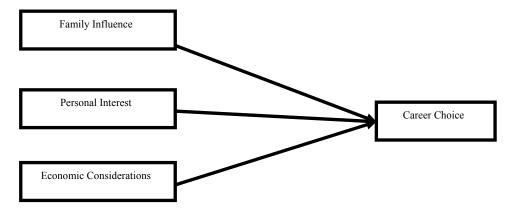


Figure 1. The variables of the study

Research Methodology Research Design

This research design focuses on a quantitative research. This design was employed because researchers can collect all the responses from the respondents and resolved within a reasonable time and it is cost-efficient (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), This study also is a cross-sectional study whereby data was collected and analyzed at one point of time only. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016), cross-sectional study is less biased and more accurate. A survey was used as the main research design because it gives better picture of respondents' attitudes (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Source of Data

Primary data source was used for data collection through self-administered structured questionnaires. The information was taken from the questionnaire that distributed to the respondents.

Unit of Analysis

This research investigated various factors that affect students' career choice in higher educational institutions Vehari. Therefore, the research was conducted on the undergraduate students who were the unit of analysis.

Population Frame

In this study, population involved undergraduate students in four well-known higher educational institutions of Pakistan namely COMSATS Institute of information technology (CIIT), University of education (UE), Bhauding-Zakarya University Multan (BZU), Agricultural University Faisalabad (AUF) whose sub-campuses are in Vehari. This study was conducted only in sub-campuses because of limited time and cost saving.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The researcher selected simple random sampling in this study because the sample size has known and any member of the population was equally a member of the sample. The researcher used Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table to determine the sample size.

Instruments

The Questionnaire was adopted from previous studies. According to Cavanna and Trimble (2006), a scale of five-point is an appropriate one and the increment from five to seven-points or even nine-points on a rating scale may not enhance the reliability of the rating. The Likert scale was used as Strongly Disagree = "1", Disagree = "2", Neutral = "3", Agree = "4" and Strongly Agree = "5".

Data Analysis Technique

The software used in this study for analyzing data was Statistical Package for Social Science version 22.0. The descriptive analysis was used to make things easier of larger data in the rational manner. The mean, standard deviation, percentage, and frequency were calculated

from collected data. The results helped the researcher to recognize the personality of the respondent thoroughly. Inferential analysis was used because it was not possible to access the entire population. The judgment, prediction, or inference was made about this population to generalize the sample characteristics.

Results

Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Frequency distribution analysis was conducted to calculate number of the respondents with unlike values and expressing in the value of percentage. The statistics in this research indicated that 133 (38%) of the 350 respondents were male from four higher educational institutions, while 217 (62%) were female students. Regarding the age distribution, 193 (55.1%) of the respondents were in the age range of 20 years or below 20 years. Moreover, 125 (35.7%) of the respondents from the institutions during the data collection were between age range of 21-24 years, 22 (6.3%) respondents were in the age range of 25-28 years, and 10 (2.9%) respondents were 29 years or above.

Only 18 (5.1%) of the respondents had their CGPA less than 2.50 and 130 (37.1%) respondents had CGPA between 2.5 - 2.99, while 141 (40.3%) had their CGPA between 3.00 - 3.49, and lastly the CGPA of 61 (17.4%) were in the range of 3.50 - 4.00. Likewise, the respondents from COMSATS were 79 (22.6%), and from BZU were110 (31.4%), and from UE were 77 (22.0%) and from AUF were 84 (24.0%). Most of the participated respondents were from BZU. Table 1 shows the Cronbach's Alpha value of three independent variables and a dependent variable.

Table 1 Cronbach's Alpha Test

Variables	Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Career Choice	8	.87
Family Influence	11	.77
Personal Interest	5	.81
Economic Considerations	8	.78

Cavana, Delahaye, and Sekaran (2001) stated that the Mean and Standard deviation provide a good sense of the data. The Mean shows the tendency of data and the Standard deviation shows the degree of variability in data. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics of all the variables.

Table 2

Descriptive Figures (N = 350)

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Variables	M	SD	
Career Choice	3.95	.63	
Family Influence	4.11	.58	
Personal Interest	3.55	.75	
Economic Considerations	4.00	.64	

The mean for family influence (M = 4.11) indicates a highest marked by respondents, with lowest standard deviation (SD = .58). This means that the family influence had very important role in influencing them to choose a career. The personal interest had the lowest mean (M = .58) and M = .58.

3.55) with a high standard deviation (SD = .75) compared to the economic considerations (M = 4.00, SD = .64).

Correlation Analysis

Pearson Correlation was performed to examine the relationship between independent variables (family influence, personal interest, economic considerations) and dependent variable (career choice). Table 3 shows a positive correlation between family influence and career choice (r = .72, p < .01). It explains that when family influence is higher it will result in choosing the best career choice. There was a positive correlation between personal interest and career choice (r = .40, p < .01). It was found that when the students knew their own personal interests well, they can decide for the choice of career. There was also a positive correlation between economic considerations and career choice (r = .62, p < .01). This indicates that when there is an improvement in economic considerations, the career choices will be more determined. The correlation results are shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3
Pearson Correlation of Variables Study

	1	2	3	4	
1. Career Choice	1				
2. Family Influence	.72**	1			
3. Personal Interest	.40**	.65**	1		
4. Economic Considerations	.62**	.47**	.45**	1	

^{**} Significant Correlation at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 4 revealed a significant correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable which is career choice (R = .71). The regression R square value was .51. This means that 51.6% of systematic variation in career choice of undergraduate students was due to variation in independent variables (family influence, personal interest and economic considerations). The F value (21.75) and its relevant p value (.000) showed that the relationship was significant at .05 level because p-value was less than at the .05 level of significance.

The dimensions of independent variables such as family influence (β = .35, p < .05) and economic considerations (β = .03, p < .05) were very significant predictors to career choice. Personal interest (β = .03, p > .05) was also significant predictor of students' career choice. In conclusion, the most important factor that influenced career choice among undergraduate student was family influence. Thus, all hypotheses (H_1 , H_2 and H_3) assumption were supported.

Table 4
Model Summary of Variables

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.71ª		.51	.54

Predictors: (Constant), FI_IV1, PI_IV2, EC_IV3

Table 5

ANOVA Statistics

	Sum of Squares	df	M	F	p
Regression	19.07	3	6.35	21.75	.000 ^b
Residual	101.10	346	.29		
Total	120.17	349			

a. Dependent Variable: CC DV

Table 6
Coefficients of Regression Analysis

		Unstandard	ized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		
Model		В	Std. Error	β	t	p
	(Constant)	2.02	.20		9.72	.000
1	FI_IV1	.32	.06	.35	5.33	.000
I	PI_IV2	.02	.05	.03	.42	.000
	EC_IV3	.03	.06	.03	.56	.022

a. Dependent Variable: CC_DV

Table 6 shows that for each unit increase in the family influence, there is .32 units increase in career choice of undergraduate students, holding other variables constant. Secondly, for each unit increase in the personal interest, there is .02 units increase in career choice of undergraduate students, holding all other variables constant. Lastly, for each unit increase in the economic considerations, there is .03 units increase in career choice of undergraduate students, holding all other variables constant. Thus, all hypotheses were supported.

As shown in Table 6, all the variables in the regression equation appeared as significant predictors of career choice. The predictors are family influence, economic considerations, and lastly personal interest. It is apparent that the most influential independent variable on career choice is family influence ($\beta = .35$) followed by economic considerations ($\beta = .03$), and personal interest ($\beta = .03$).

The result revealed that family influence, personal interest and economic considerations were significantly and positively influenced the career choice among undergraduate students. Thus, all hypotheses (H1, H2, and H3) were accepted.

Discussion

This is in line with the previous studies that stressed that the relatives and families of undergraduate students do determine their career choice (Fuller, Kvasny, Trauth, & Joshi, 2015; Lins Damasceno, Barreto, Menezes, de Jesus Santos, Herbas, & Lisboa, 2015; Meddour et al., 2016). This study also indicated a positive relationship between personal interests and career choice. The finding is also supported by studies of Schiefele, Krapp, and Winteler (1992) and Lent et al. (2002) who examined that with the deeper passion and knowledge on the selected career, the person will give their all efforts to do the best to achieve the dream career. Additionally, the interest will encourage students to discover more on activities that they are interested in. It is evident from the outcome of this study that when the economy is in good condition, the career choices made by students will also increase. This statement is also

b. Predictors: (Constant), FI IV1, PI IV2, EC IV3

supported in a study of Meddour et al., (2016). This is to say that career opportunities for students will be high and they will have a variety of job choices if the economic situation is good; when the economic situation is worse, the career choices for students will be less and limited.

The researcher was unable to meet all the expected number of undergraduate students during collecting data at different institutions. Moreover, the application of the results of this research is limited to the undergraduate students, more cases of data are needed to be collected for generalization of the research findings in a complex context.

This study suggests that a career advisor can inspire the development of a successful career by classifying sources of psychosocial support to students after the early decision of career was made. People offering career advice to students should guarantee that they provide precise information that will lead students to a correct career choice. Students must acknowledge their own interests, personality and skills. Institutions, industry, and families need to provide an environment that fosters students' awareness of their true self which becomes a students' mentor, facilitator, or assistants. The students need to develop some kind of procedures that are helpful for them. As students start the procedure earlier, the probability of getting unnecessary result is greatly smaller and less painful. There can be also failures in order to be successful.

Conclusion

This study has examined three hypotheses concerning the factors influencing the career choice among undergraduate students in higher educational institutions, Vehari. This study has presented the discussion about the findings of analysis between independent and dependent variables. A total of three significant relationships between the independents and dependent variables were established. Thus, the total respondents in this study were 350. Overall, the focus of this study was on three factors which were family influence, personal interest and economic considerations. The results revealed that all these factors have a significant positive impact on the career choice.

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