

Factors of Interest in Choosing A Profession of Students of The Graduating Class of General Secondary Education Schools

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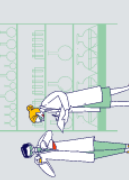
Abstract

This article explores the factors that influence the career choices of students in the graduating class of general secondary education schools. The transition from secondary education to higher education or the workforce is a crucial juncture in a young person's life, and the choices made during this period can significantly impact their future. Understanding the factors that drive these decisions is essential for educators, policymakers, and career counselors to provide effective guidance and support to students. Through a comprehensive analysis of various factors, including personal interests, family influence, societal expectations, and economic considerations, this study aims to shed light on the complex decision-making process of students as they embark on their professional journeys.

Keywords: Career choices; Graduating students; General secondary education; Influencing factors; Decision-making process.

INTRODUCTION

The transition from general secondary education to the world of higher education or the workforce is a pivotal moment in the lives of graduating students. During this period, young individuals are faced with the daunting task of choosing a profession that will shape their futures. The choice of a career path is a multifaceted decision influenced by a myriad of factors, and understanding these factors is essential for educators, policymakers, and career counselors to provide effective guidance and support. This article aims to delve into the intricate web of factors that impact the career choices of students in the graduating class of general secondary education schools. While some students may have a clear vision of their future careers, many grapple with uncertainty and indecision. The decision-making process is often a dynamic interplay of personal interests, family expectations, societal pressures, and economic considerations. Personal interests play a crucial role in shaping career aspirations. Some students are driven by a deep passion for a particular field, while others may be influenced by external factors such as family traditions or peer influences. Moreover, family plays a significant role in career choices. Parental expectations and support can either encourage or limit a student's choices. Societal expectations and prevailing norms also influence the career decisions of graduating students. Cultural, gender, and socioeconomic factors can steer students toward or away from certain professions. Additionally, economic considerations, including job prospects and potential earnings, are significant factors in the decision-making process. This article aims to shed light on the complex interplay of these factors, providing



insights into the forces that shape the career choices of students as they embark on their professional journeys. By gaining a deeper understanding of these influencing factors, educators and policymakers can develop more effective strategies to assist students in making informed and fulfilling career decisions, ultimately leading to better outcomes for the graduating class of general secondary education schools.

MAIN PART

The transition from general secondary education to higher education or the workforce marks a crucial juncture in the lives of graduating students. At this pivotal moment, they are confronted with the daunting task of choosing a profession that will significantly influence their future paths. The choices made during this period are far from arbitrary; instead, they are the result of a complex interplay of various factors. Understanding the factors that drive these decisions is essential for educators, policymakers, and career counselors to provide effective guidance and support to students as they embark on their professional journeys.

In the complex and dynamic process of choosing a profession, graduating students of general secondary education schools navigate a maze of personal interests, family influence, societal expectations, and economic considerations. Each factor exerts its unique pull, and the interaction among these factors can lead to a diverse array of career choices. Understanding these influencing factors is crucial for educators, policymakers, and career counselors. By gaining insights into the complexities of this decision-making process, they can provide more effective guidance and support to students as they embark on their professional journeys. Ultimately, a well-informed and balanced approach to career decision-making can lead to more fulfilling and successful futures for the graduating class of general secondary education schools.¹

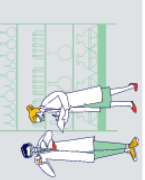
1. Personal Interests: The Passion Within

One of the most fundamental and influential factors in choosing a profession is personal interest and passion. It is not uncommon for students to be naturally drawn to specific fields of study or occupations based on their interests, hobbies, or talents. For instance, a student with a deep fascination for biology may aspire to become a biologist, while someone with a flair for the arts may lean towards a career in the creative industries.

Personal interests can be cultivated over time or may have been nurtured since childhood. These interests often serve as a guiding force, steering students toward professions that align with their intrinsic motivations and desires. However, it is worth noting that while personal interests can be a powerful driving factor, they may not always align with the most practical or financially rewarding career choices. This is where other factors come into play.²

¹ Sadler, P.M., Sonnert, G., Hazari, Z. and Tai, R., 2014. The Role of Advanced High School Coursework in Increasing STEM Career Interest. *Science Educator*, 23(1), pp.1-13.

² Wang, X., 2013. Why students choose STEM majors: Motivation, high school learning, and postsecondary context of support. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(5), pp.1081-1121.



2. Family Influence: Navigating Expectations and Traditions³

The influence of family cannot be overstated when it comes to career choices. Parents and immediate family members often play a pivotal role in shaping a student's aspirations. Their expectations, values, and experiences can significantly impact a student's decision-making process. In some cases, parents may encourage their children to follow in their footsteps, continuing family traditions or pursuing professions that are considered prestigious or stable. Conversely, family expectations can sometimes create tension and conflict. Students may find themselves torn between pursuing their own interests and fulfilling familial obligations or desires. Striking a balance between personal aspirations and familial expectations can be a challenging task, and it requires open communication and understanding within the family unit.

3. Societal Expectations: The Pressure to Conform

Societal expectations and prevailing norms play a substantial role in the career decisions of graduating students. Cultural, gender, and socioeconomic factors can exert a significant influence on the paths students choose to follow. In some cultures, certain professions may be highly esteemed, while others are viewed with skepticism or disapproval. Gender stereotypes can also play a role in career choices. Some fields may be traditionally associated with one gender, leading students to feel pressured to conform to these expectations or to break free from them. Moreover, socioeconomic factors can limit or expand students' options, as individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds may face additional challenges in accessing certain professions.⁴

4. Economic Considerations: Balancing Passion and Practicality

Economic considerations, including job prospects, potential earnings, and financial stability, are undeniable factors in the career decision-making process. Many students are acutely aware of the need to secure their financial future, which can influence their choice of profession. Fields with promising job opportunities and higher earning potential often attract a significant number of students.⁵

However, the pursuit of financial stability does not always align with personal interests or passions. Students may face the dilemma of choosing between a career they are passionate about and one that offers greater financial security. Striking a balance between these considerations can be challenging, and students may need to weigh the long-term benefits of pursuing their passions against the immediate financial gains of a more stable career.⁶

5. Educational Opportunities and Access

³ Godwin, A., Potvin, G. and Hazari, Z., 2013, June. The development of critical engineering agency, identity, and the impact on engineering career choices. In 2013 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition (pp. 23-1184).

⁴ Sahin, Alpaslan, Adem Ekmekci, and Hersh C. Waxman. "Collective effects of individual, behavioral, and contextual factors on high school students' future STEM career plans." *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education* 16 (2018): 69-89.

⁵ Sahin, Alpaslan, and Hersh C. Waxman. "Factors affecting high school students' STEM career interest: Findings from a 4-year study." *Journal of STEM Education: Innovations and Research* 22, no. 3 (2021).

⁶ Mji, A. and Makgato, M., 2006. Factors associated with high school learners' poor performance: a spotlight on mathematics and physical science. *South African journal of education*, 26(2), pp.253-266.

Access to educational opportunities and resources can also be a significant factor in career choices. Some students may have limited access to higher education or vocational training, which can narrow their career options. Conversely, students with access to a wide range of educational opportunities may have the flexibility to explore diverse career paths.⁷

Additionally, the quality of education and guidance available at secondary schools can shape students' perceptions of various professions. Exposure to different fields and career options during secondary education can broaden students' horizons and enable them to make more informed choices.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the factors that shape the career choices of students in the graduating class of general secondary education schools are as diverse as the students themselves. Personal interests, family influences, societal expectations, economic considerations, and access to educational opportunities all play critical roles in this intricate decision-making process. Recognizing the significance of these factors is paramount for educators, policymakers, and career counselors alike. It highlights the need for a multifaceted approach to career guidance that takes into account the individuality of each student's journey. It's not just about guiding students toward high-demand professions or prestigious paths; it's about empowering them to make informed decisions that align with their passions, values, and aspirations.

Moreover, the interplay of these factors underscores the importance of fostering open dialogue within families and communities. By creating supportive environments that encourage students to explore their interests and express their aspirations, we can help alleviate some of the pressures associated with family and societal expectations.

Ultimately, the goal is to equip graduating students with the knowledge, self-awareness, and resilience they need to navigate the complex landscape of career choices successfully. While the factors influencing these decisions may be diverse and at times conflicting, a well-informed and balanced approach can empower students to embark on their professional journeys with confidence, purpose, and the potential for fulfillment and success. In doing so, we invest not only in the futures of these young individuals but also in the betterment of our society as a whole.

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