Navigating Career Choices: Motivating And Demotivating Factors Among Students In University Of Peshawar

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Abstract

Career selection is a critical decision impacting individuals' future trajectories, income, social status, and emotional well-being. This study investigates the motivating and demotivating factors influencing career choices among intermediate students in Peshawar, Pakistan. Conducted at the University of Peshawar, the research employs a cross-sectional descriptive design with a sample of 300 students. Findings reveal that "Personal Interest" is the primary motivating factor for both male (62.42%) and female (66.92%) students, while "Fear of Uncertainty" is the dominant demotivating factor for both genders, affecting 29.47% of males and 38.58% of females. These results indicate th[1]at students are driven by their passions but hindered by uncertainties regarding future outcomes. The study highlights the necessity for educators and career counselors to focus on students' interests and provide robust guidance to alleviate uncertainties. This approach can help students make informed career choices, enhancing their motivation and dedication. The research contributes to existing literature on career development, emphasizing the importance of personal interest and addressing fears in career decision-making. Future research should consider diverse student populations and explore additional factors influencing career choices to develop comprehensive career guidance programs.

Keywords: Motivating Factors, Demotivating Factors, Peshawar University, Career Selection.

1.Introduction

Career selection represents a pivotal juncture in an individual's life, significantly impacting their future trajectory, income, social status, and emotional well-being[1]. For intermediate students in Peshawar, this decision-making process is particularly intricate, influenced by an array of factors that encompass personal interests, societal expectations, and economic considerations.[2]. Understanding the motivating and demotivating factors that shape career

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choices among these students is crucial for educational institutions, policymakers, and career counselors to provide tailored support and guidance[3][4].

Research in vocational psychology has illuminated the complexity of career decision-making, highlighting the role of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators[5]. Intrinsic motivators include personal interests, passions, and aspirations, while extrinsic factors often involve job security, financial stability, and societal recognition. Previous studies have extensively explored these aspects, yet there remains a critical gap in understanding how cultural and contextual differences specifically impact career choices, particularly within diverse settings, such as Peshawar[6][7].

In recent years, the landscape of career choices has evolved, influenced by a multitude of factors ranging from personal aspirations to socio-cultural contexts[8]. Intermediate students, navigating through this complex decision-making process, encounter various motivators and deterrents that significantly impact their career choices[9][10]. Motivating factors often stem from intrinsic desires, such as a passion for a particular field, personal fulfillment, and the pursuit of meaningful work[11][12]. Conversely, demotivating factors can arise from external pressures, such as societal expectations, economic constraints, and a lack of guidance, leading to uncertainty and apprehension regarding career decisions[13].

This study endeavors to shed light on these influences by investigating the motivating and demotivating factors that affect career selection among intermediate students in Peshawar. By focusing on cultural and personal factors, the research aims to unravel the complexities of career decision-making within this specific context. Drawing on insights from psychological theories, cross-cultural research, and empirical studies, this research seeks to provide valuable insights into the intricate interplay between individual preferences, cultural influences, and societal norms in determining career paths.

By examining these factors, the study aims to contribute to the existing literature on career development and counseling. It provides insights that can inform the design of effective career guidance programs and interventions tailored to the diverse needs of intermediate students. Ultimately, this research aspires to empower the youth of Peshawar with informed career choices, fostering their future success and fulfillment.

In this article, we present and analyze the results of a study conducted among University of Peshawar students, focusing on the impact of career exploration and other culturally relevant variables on career development. By examining career awareness and self-understanding outcomes, we extend our analysis beyond individual behavior to consider the broader cultural context[14].

Previous research has shown that adolescents frequently discuss career issues with their parents, identifying them as a major influence during educational and career transitions.[15].

Career choice has evolved into a complex science with the advent of information technology, the emergence of the post-industrial revolution, and increasing job competition. In the past, career paths were often predetermined by family roles, such as a blacksmith's son becoming a blacksmith or a feudal lord's child inheriting leadership. However, industrialization and post-industrialization have enabled individuals to achieve greater social mobility, allowing anyone with the necessary skills and knowledge to attain success and wealth[16].

Most secondary school students do not have accurate information about occupational opportunities to help them make appropriate career choices. According to Kerka (2000), career

choice is influenced by personality, interests, self-concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and finances.[16]

Bandura et al. (2001) state that individuals are influenced by several factors when making career choices, including their living context, personal aptitudes, social contacts, and educational attainment. According to Hewitt (2010), career choice factors can be intrinsic, extrinsic, or both. Hewitt further explains that many people are influenced by their parents' preferences, while others choose careers based on educational opportunities, personal passion, or potential income. McQuaid and Bond (2003) add that students' perceptions of their suitability for specific jobs are influenced by various factors, including ethnic background, school year, level of achievement, choice of science subjects, attitudes, and job characteristics[16].

Oyamo and Amoth (2008) found that in Kenya, rural students are more likely to seek help from parents than urban students, and parents play a more significant role than teachers in students' career choices. Generally, career choices are influenced by parents, friends, and counselors, although these influences vary among different populations[16].

To assist students in making career decisions, school counselors must identify the difficulties adolescents face and provide guidance on how to overcome or minimize these challenges. The goal of this study was to characterize and categorize the various types of career-related decision-making difficulties encountered by adolescents, using a general theoretical model for analyzing such difficulties[17].

Research indicates that numerous factors influence an individual's decision-making process when selecting their first career, many of which fall under the category of perceptions. Perception plays a crucial role in our lives as it shapes our future decisions. Therefore, this study aims to understand the various perceptions of students that can impact their initial employability decisions[18].

These studies highlight that students' decisions regarding their first career choice are influenced by a multitude of factors. Understanding these factors is crucial for appreciating trends and developing human resources strategies to attract new talents to organizations. This paper seeks to identify the influences that determine undergraduates' decisions when selecting careers in industry through campus recruitment drives.

In conclusion, this study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the motivating and demotivating factors influencing career choices among intermediate students in Peshawar. By exploring these factors within the cultural and personal contexts of the students, this research intends to uncover the complexities involved in their career decision-making processes. The insights gained from this study are expected to inform educational institutions, policymakers, and career counselors on how to better support students in navigating their career paths effectively. Ultimately, by addressing these influences, this research seeks to contribute to the enhancement of career guidance programs tailored to the unique needs and aspirations of intermediate students in Peshawar, thereby fostering their personal and professional development.

2. Methodology

2.1 Study setting

This study was conducted at University of Peshawar, Pakistan.

2.2 Study Duration

This study was conducted between April 27th,2024 and May 25th,2024.

2.3 Study Design

The study design of the study was cross sectional descriptive study.

2.4 Inclusion Criteria

Those students were considered in our study who were enrolled in University of Peshawar.

2.5 Exclusion Criteria

Those Students from our study were excluded who were not enrolled in University of Peshawar.

2.6 Instrument

The survey questionnaire was designed based on background information from research findings. Participants completed a self-scored online questionnaire, which included demographic questions such as gender, age, and field of study. The 16-question survey was divided into two sections: Motivating and Demotivating Factors for Career Selection.

2.7 Procedure

Class representatives were instructed to distribute the online questionnaire to their classmates through email. To ensure maximum participation, data collection was conducted electronically. Students were encouraged to complete the survey by the May 25th, 2024 deadline. The survey included a cover letter detailing its purpose, the inclusion criteria, assurance of anonymity, and the voluntary nature of participation. By completing and submitting the questionnaire, participants gave their voluntary consent to be included in the research study as outlined in the cover letter.

2.8 Statistical Analysis

Data entry and analysis were performed using Origin Pro 2018 and Microsoft Excel.

3. Results

A total of 300 participants successfully completed the online questionnaire, with no exclusions from the final data report due to incomplete responses. The majority of participants were male (n=173, 57.7%), while female participants numbered fewer (n=127, 42.3%).

3.1 Motivating Factors for Career Selection among male Students:

Figure 1 displays the percentage distribution of motivating factors influencing male students' choices. "Personal Interest" is the leading factor, affecting 62.42% of male students. "Family Influence" and "Good Job Opportunities" follow, with 19.07% and 10.4% respectively. "Teacher Guidance" impacts 4.65%, while both "Friend Suggestions" and "Society Pressure" are the least influential, each affecting only 1.73% of male students. The graph highlights the significant role of personal interest and the relatively lower influence of social pressures and peer suggestions on male students' decisions.
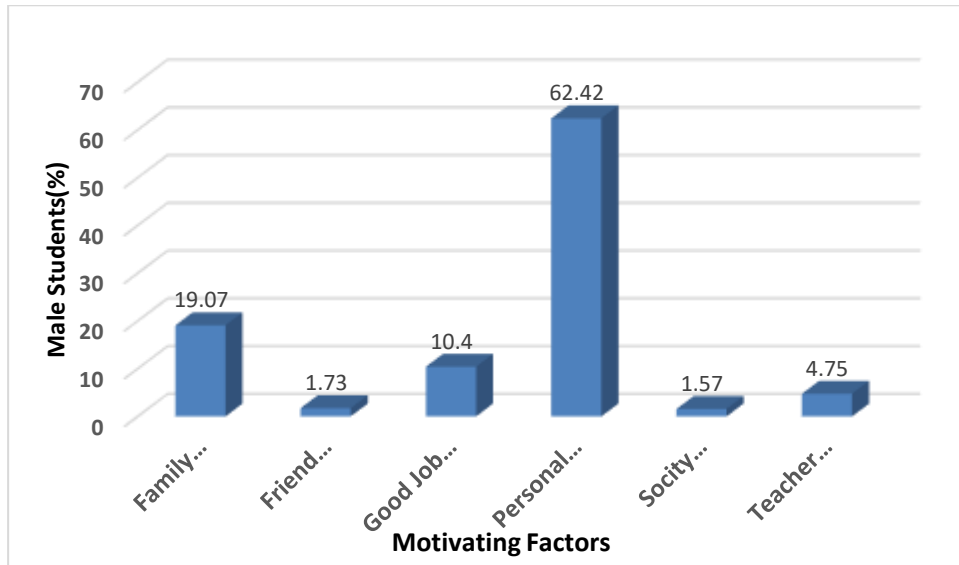
Figure 1: Motivating Factors for Career Selection among male Students

3.2 Demotivating Factors for Career Selection among male Students:

Figure 2 illustrates the percentage distribution of demotivating factors affecting male students. "Lack of Financial Support" is the most significant factor, impacting 30.66% of male students, followed closely by "Fear of Uncertainty" at 29.47%. "Lack of Career Counseling" affects 24.85%, while the "Influence of Social Media" impacts 13.87% of male students. The "Concept of General Norms" has the least influence, affecting only 1.15% of male students. This graph highlights that financial constraints and uncertainty about the future are the primary demotivating factors, while general societal norms have minimal impact on male students' decisions.
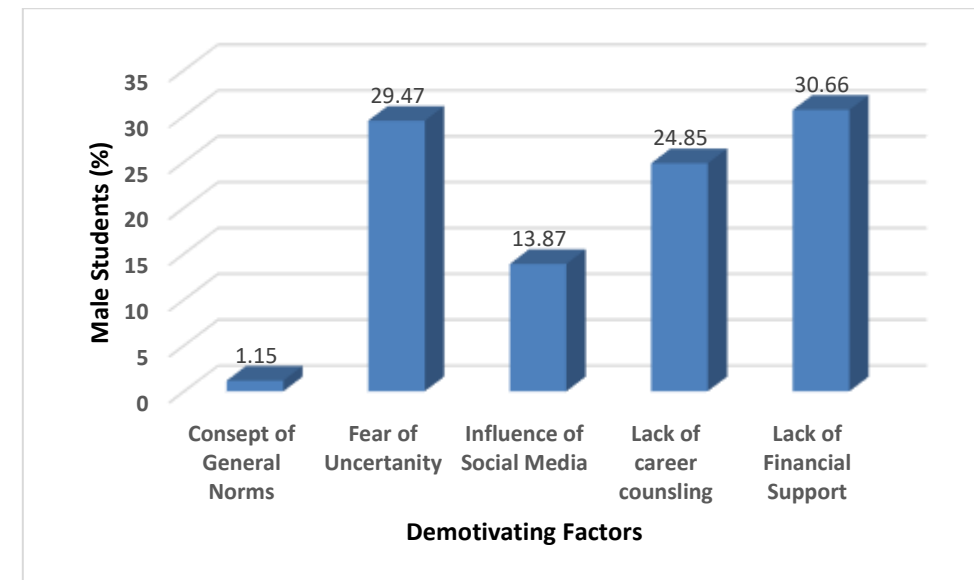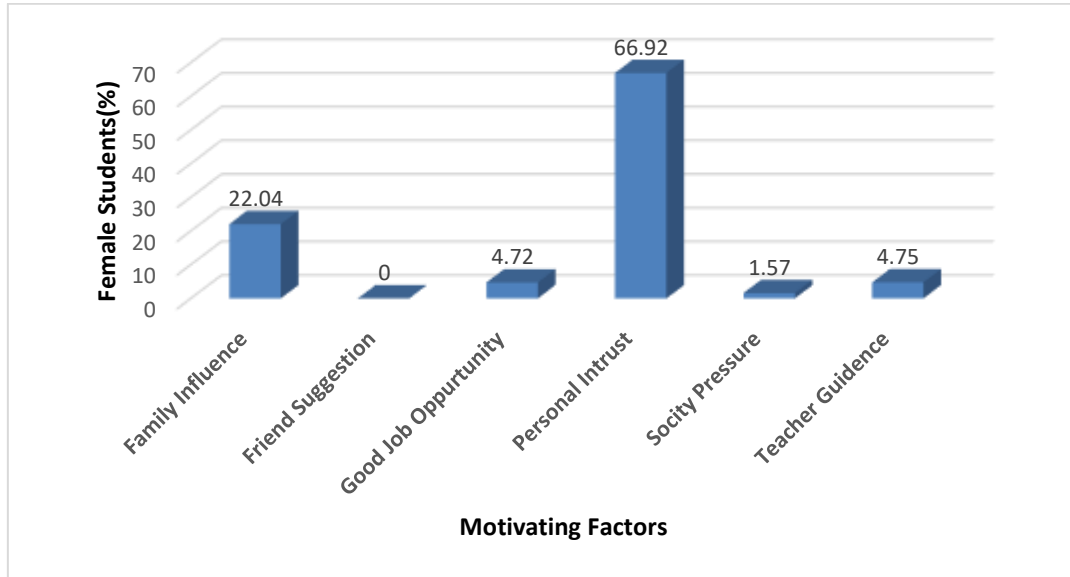

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Figure 2: Demotivating Factors for Career Selection among male Students

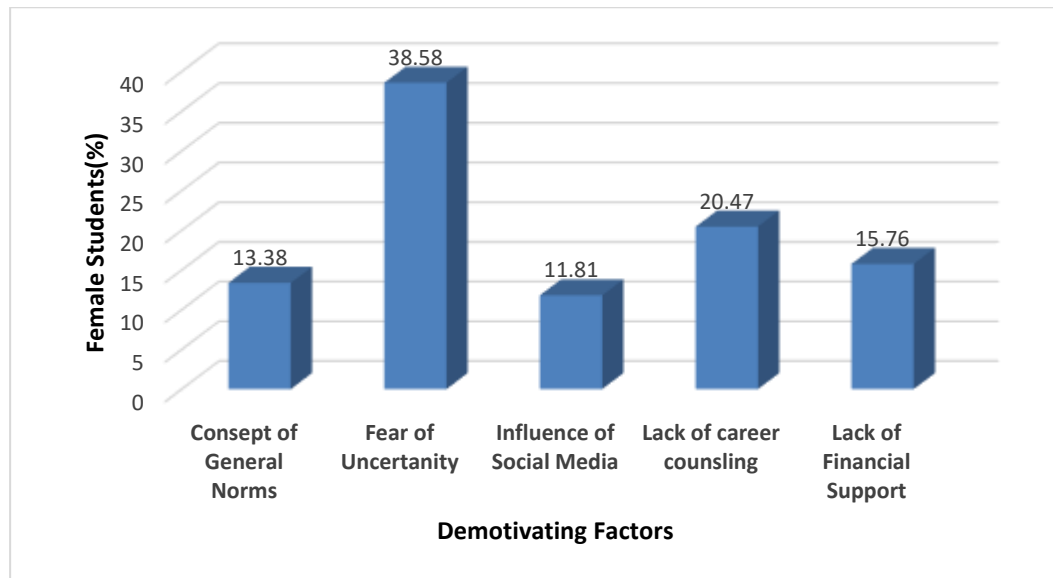**3.3 Motivating Factors for Career Selection among female Students**

The bar graph displays the percentage distribution of motivating factors influencing female students' choices. "Personal Interest" is the most significant factor, affecting 66.92% of female students. "Family Influence" follows with 22.04%, while "Teacher Guidance" and "Good Job Opportunities" impact 4.75% and 4.72% respectively. "Society Pressure" influences 1.57%, and "Friend Suggestions" have no impact, at 0%. The graph highlights the predominant role of personal interest and family influence, with minimal impact from social pressures and peer suggestions on female students' decisions.

Figure 3: Motivating Factors for Career Selection among female Students

3.4 Demotivating Factors for Career Selection among male Students

The bar graph shows the percentage distribution of demotivating factors affecting female students. "Fear of Uncertainty" is the most significant factor, influencing 38.58% of female students. "Lack of Career Counseling" and "Lack of Financial Support" impact 20.47% and 15.76% of female students, respectively. "Concept of General Norms" affects 13.38%, while the "Influence of Social Media" impacts 11.81% of female students. The graph highlights that uncertainty about the future is the primary demotivating factor for female students, with social media having a relatively lower impact on their decisions.

Figure 4: Demotivating Factors for Career Selection among female Students

4. Discussions

4.1 Summary of Key Findings
This study investigated the motivating and demotivating factors influencing career selection among intermediate students in Peshawar. The results show that personal interest was the most significant motivating factor, while fear of uncertainty was the dominant demotivating factor.

4.2 Interpretation of Results
The findings suggest that students are primarily driven by their passion and interest in a particular field when choosing a career. This is a positive indication, as personal interest can lead to increased motivation and dedication in their chosen profession[19], [20] On the other hand, fear of uncertainty emerged as a significant demotivating factor, indicating that students are hesitant to pursue careers with unclear outcomes or risks[21]

4.3 Relation to Previous Research
Our findings align with previous studies that highlight the importance of personal interest in career choices[19], [20] However, the prominence of fear of uncertainty as a demotivating factor contrasts with research emphasizing financial constraints as a primary concern[22][23]

4.4 Implications of the Findings
The results suggest that educators and career counselors should emphasize exploring students' interests and strengths to facilitate informed career decisions[24]. Additionally, addressing fears and uncertainties through guidance and support can help students overcome obstacles and pursue their desired careers[25]

4.5 Limitations of the Study
This study was limited to intermediate students in Peshawar, which may not be representative of all student populations. Future research should aim to include diverse samples and explore additional motivating and demotivating factors.

4.6 Future Directions for Research

Future studies could investigate the impact of career guidance programs on students' motivation and career choices[26]). Additionally, exploring the role of parental influence[27], peer pressure[28] and societal expectations[29] on career selection would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors at play.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study reveals that personal interest and fear of uncertainty are the most significant motivating and demotivating factors influencing career selection among intermediate students in Peshawar. The findings underscore the importance of aligning career choices with individual passions and interests, and addressing fears and uncertainties through guidance and support. The study's results have implications for educators, career counselors, and policymakers, highlighting the need to prioritize career guidance programs and create supportive environments that foster informed career decision-making. While limitations exist, this research contributes to our understanding of career development in Pakistani students and paves the way for future investigations into the complex factors shaping career choices.

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