

Factors Influencing The Career Choice Of Students At Secondary School Level In Rawalpindi

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the factors influencing career decisions among secondary school students in Rawalpindi. It utilizes a quantitative research approach, targeting all secondary-level government schools in the city. Data from 384 students (207 girls and 177 boys) was collected through questionnaires, employing a simple random sampling technique. The research design is descriptive, employing a survey-based methodology. SPSS software (version 21) was utilized for data analysis, including calculating mean, standard deviation, and percentages. The findings, presented in tabular form, indicate that societal influences play ¹a significant role in guiding students through the career selection process. Additionally, the study highlights further factors influencing career decisions among secondary school students in Rawalpindi. The conclusions drawn from this research provide valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders involved in guiding students towards successful career paths. By identifying career choices, investigating influencing factors, comparing and identifying decision-making strategies, the study provides valuable insights that can inform targeted interventions, policies, and programs aimed at empowering students in making informed and fulfilling career decisions. Ultimately, such efforts contribute to the holistic development and well-being of students as they transition into the workforce and pursue their professional aspirations.

Keyword: Career Choice, Career Aspirations Secondary Level Students, Parental Education.

INTRODUCTION

The idea of choosing a vocation as a means of support begins as soon as kids start acting out role-playing as teachers, doctors, or other professionals they observe in the world. Children are typically asked to reply to questions regarding the professions they must choose in the future (Ezeweani & Atomatofa, 2013). At this stage, preparation for a profession, increased awareness of careers and occupations, investigation and analysis of real-life heroes and characters, and knowledge of prejudices about particular vocations are the primary requirements (Jonhson & Christensen, 2012). Rod of the requirement that pupils "aspect forward." He promoted the development of one's capacity for self-awareness, work-related information, making decisions, predicting, and problem-solving (Bacanli, 2006).

"Livelihood commenced for a momentous date of a person's life and with opportunities for his progress," according to the Oxford Dictionary. When interpreted in this way, the term

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"career" can refer to a wide range of professions, contrary to the widely held belief that only those in specific professions are deemed to have a career. Secondary education's dual goals of equipping students with cutting-edge skills and the workforce with skilled workers are the preparation of individuals for life's difficulties (National Education Policy, 2009). Students make critical decisions throughout this stage of their education that will significantly affect their future employment in terms of the disciplines and courses they choose to study.

According to Zhou, Guan, Xin, Mak, and Deng (2016), children (undergraduate students) have a tendency to appreciate their parents' ideal occupations more than other people do if those careers offer a comfortable living, happiness, prestige, performance, and social standing. As children get older, they develop a strong understanding of their parents' jobs, claims Gwelo (2019). In every area of their children's lives, including their choice of employment, parents are extremely important (Michele & Francesco, 2018). According to Singaravelu et al. (2005), cultural and socioeconomic factors have a significant impact on students' job aspirations since societal needs and demands determine individual professional paths. Students' career trends are also influenced by their gender and ethnicity. Elizabeth (2012) discovered that professional outcomes are significantly influenced by gender stereotype attitudes.

Olamide and Salami (2013) claim that when teenagers are oblivious to the competitive nature of the workforce and the abilities necessary for it, making career options is a nightmare. Mudhovozi and Chireshe (2012) discovered that private schools have a greater impact on students' professional readiness. According to Gwelo (2019), personality type is one of the important considerations that must be carefully considered while selecting a vocation. According to Takacs (2016), students should identify their own traits and match them with the careers that best suit them. Secondary school pupils' career choices are significantly influenced by their personalities (Kiani, 2021). Additionally, a student's interests, extracurricular activities, and academic standing during their school years greatly influence their future job goals.

According to research, counseling and advice can be extremely important, have a long-lasting impact on students' performance, and prevent kids from abusing drugs or alcohol or turning to violence. It can help pupils do better academically, which has a good impact on their grade. It also increases kids' capacity for academic performance and efficiency. Counseling helps learners become more confident in their ability to make decisions and solve problems, but in Rawalpindi, the ratio of career roles to learner roles is quite low. One of the most pressing concerns in Rawalpindi's secondary schools has been career choices.

The home environment has a big influence on how undeveloped people choose their careers and roles in life, as does the role of parents, guardians, and family. In addition, secondary school students' employment choices are significantly influenced by the educational environment in which they study. Additionally, sociocultural factors like the larger social backdrop, the home environment, and the influence of aristocracies and servants are cited as critical factors in shaping secondary school pupils' job decisions (Anderson, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

The goal of the current study was to identify the variables influencing students' career choice in secondary schools in the Rawalpindi. A poor career decision might have a long-term effect on a student's whole life. If secondary school kids in Pakistan don't obtain the proper counselling services while they are in school, they won't have the precious opportunity to learn about all the options that are available depending on their interests. They could think they just have one or two options, which could demoralize them if they don't really favour any of them. As a result, the majority of students made their job decisions without knowing much about themselves or their alternatives. The absence of parental participation and the overall paucity of career adviser services make it difficult for college students to choose their careers. The

topic of job choice at the secondary level is often the least researched in Pakistan, and very little study has been done in this field.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are.

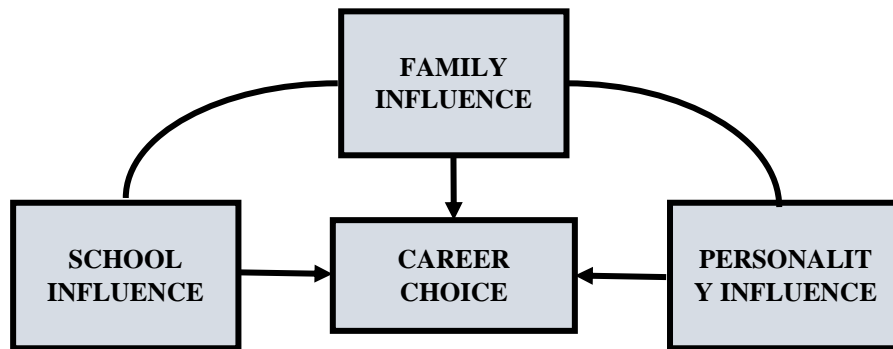
- I. To identify the career choices of secondary school students in Rawalpindi.
- II. To investigate the factors that affect the career choice of students at secondary level in Rawalpindi.

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are.

- I. What career choices are made by the secondary school students in Rawalpindi?
- II. What are the factors influencing the career choice of students at secondary level in Rawalpindi?

Conceptual Framework



Conceptual Framework

Career choice takes an imperative path in the life of a one, shaped by their unique abilities, interests, skills, and values. According to Ezeweani & Atomatofa (2013), a comprehensive examination of the factors influencing career choices holds significant implications for students' future endeavors. In this context, career choice serves as the dependent variable, influenced by several independent variables including family background, school environment, gender, and personality. Family dynamics can exert a considerable influence on career choices, especially when parents lack formal education or face financial challenges, potentially guiding students down diverse career paths.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Career Choice

According to Christopher Okoth Onyango (2016), the phrase "career choice" describes the process of pursuing a profession through a particular course of study that results in a unique occupation that is chosen by an individual based on their needs, aptitude, passion, abilities, and interests in various organizations. According to Elizabeth (2012), choosing a career is the process of deciding on a student's future means of subsistence or choosing one professional

path over others. Parson (1909) asserts that a person's career choice is the cornerstone of their occupational wellbeing and professional decision-making. As such, it is fully dependent on information about the person's personality, interests, abilities, values, and knowledge of the demographics associated with the labor market.

According to Gutteridge (1986), choosing a job is an endeavor that involves getting to know oneself, as well as possibilities and obstacles. It also involves setting goals for one's career, work values, training and skill development, and managing all of these steps toward reaching those goals. The voluntary act of choosing or withdrawing from two or more things that are revered, as well as the mental decision to choose one object over another, are the definitions of choice given by Webster's International Dictionary (1998). The multifaceted phenomenon of career choice can be better understood by examining its constituent elements, namely career and choice. Career has been the subject of numerous studies since the groundbreaking works of Hughes (2007) and Goffman (2008), regardless of where the studies originated. On the other hand, the concepts as proposed by critical realists today represent a multi-layered understanding that welcomes the interaction between subjective experiences and objective work structures (Layder, 2003).

Social cognitive career choice theory

Lent, Brown, and Hackett presented a theory in 1994 that connected several views about the evolution of career choice. This approach included personal variables, the environment, and both individual and external behavior as factors influencing a career. Expectations for a particular career's outcome are beliefs about such careers' outcomes. Affective and behavioral components serve as the foundation for cognitive notions. One of the cognitive structures that is crucial in determining career objectives is work values (Brown, 2002).

Family Influence on Career Choice

In every area of their children's lives, including their choice of employment, parents are extremely important (Michele & Francesco, 2018). Additionally, Kumazhege (2017) discovered a strong correlation between parents' choices for a career and their own. According to Zhou, Guan, Xin, Mak, and Deng (2016), children (undergraduate students) have a tendency to appreciate their parents' ideal occupations more than others if those careers offer a comfortable living, fulfillment, prestige, performance, and social standing. The family-related domains include the parents' marital affiliation, the family's socioeconomic status, the home environment (i.e., how friendly or unfriendly the parents are), the workplace, the parents, and the family (Bolu-steve & Sanni, 2013).

Some students will have to plan their educational expenses based on their income. "Where necessary, these persons (individuals described as living below poverty level) must be assisted through special training programs to overcome educational and social handicaps so that minimum job standards can be met," Splaver (2016) said in response to those in dire need (p.1). Senior high school students will have successfully chosen a job if they made a thorough, deliberate educational selection that considered all aspect of the career choice process (Splaver, 2016). Their children's job decisions and future achievement (Cannan, 2008). In Nigeria, parents have a significant impact on their children's academic achievement and eventual job choices (Olamide & Olawaiye, 2013).

School Influence on Career Choice

Career guidance is offered at institutions of learning such as schools, colleges and universities among others. Secondary schools are a transition to higher institutions of learning and the world of work so they have a critical role in assisting students choose careers (Baloch & Shah, 2014). If students have too many choices of careers or have not made a decision on which career to take, school career guidance is helpful in selecting their study paths and in identifying their

potential strengths to enhance their competitiveness for positions (Dodge & Welderndael, Sun & Yuen (2012). Hence, a lack of career guidance may cause students to make wrong choices and enroll for studies they know little or nothing about Kimiti & Mwova (2012). Career guidance teachers in schools have an important role in advocating for broad based career plans that focus on the student's interests and abilities and that will increase future career options (Mghweno et al., 2014). In the same American study, it was revealed that many of the focus group participants felt career guidance teachers were largely helpful (Zayas and McGuigan, 2006). It is the role of the school from early adolescence, to assist learners to find meaning in their present and future lives (Mampane & Bouwer, 2011). American school engagement involves behavioral as well as emotional components that play a meditational role in the association between developmental assets such as careers and academic competence (Li, Lerner & Lerner, 2010).

Personality Influence on the Career Choice

Kiani (2021) mostly essentially found that personality for the most part essentially bears a significant aftershock on the career choice of the very young individuals in a very big way in a subtle way. Bacanlı (2006) identified that personality for all intents and purposes essentially is the reason to up rise the particularly for all intents and purposes academic maturity and conceptual development of the students in a particularly big way, which literally is significant. (Gottfredson et al.,1993) figured out the importance of the generally social career preferences considering the personality of an individual, generally contrary to popular belief. Nazli (2007) was greatly inspired by the potential of decision of the students in the field of career. Obiunu and Ebunu (2010) stated the factors essential for the growth of the career which included an essential trait of personality.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Population

The population of the study were the 1,73254 students from 15 secondary schools of Rawalpindi city.

There are 174 secondary schools in Rawalpindi city that were the unit of analysis of this study. 15 school were selected as a targeted population. Enrolled students are 1,73254. 60% are female making up to a number of 1,04125 and the boys make a ratio of 39.89% encompassing 69103 male students. Others carry a strength of 2601 making 0.02% of the total.

Sample and Sampling Technique

In the selection of the sample of the study, various steps was taken to ensure its representativeness. For this purpose, the sample respondents was chosen through a simple random sampling technique, as it offers a reliable means to achieve the desired representation of the relevant population. A sample size of 384 secondary-level students was selected. According to the recommendation of Gay and Mills (2012), a 10% sample size is considered sufficient for a large population, while a 15% sample size is adequate for a smaller population when aiming to generalize results to the entire population. In this study, a 10% sample size is utilized to facilitate result generalization. Furthermore, 15 schools are randomly selected from the population that included in my study

Research Instruments

This study is descriptive in nature and survey questionnaires was used as instruments for the data collection. One questionnaire of the five-point Likert scale (1. Strongly disagree to 5. Strongly agree) has been individually developed by using the researcher who focused on the

objective of the study. In this study one questionnaire is developed for students at secondary schools.

Pilot Testing

A pilot test is a trial run of processes and tools that were used. Pilot testing was used in this study because it reduces the errors. A pilot test was conducted to determine the suitability of the instrument before a formal survey was conducted. Based on the advice of the experts, we were made some minor adjustments. Then performed a pilot test of the resultant survey with 40 randomly chosen secondary school students to determine how simple and clear the questionnaire items are, as well as to establish the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

Validity of the Instruments

Verifying the validity and reliability of research findings is essential to guaranteeing their accuracy and credibility. It is challenging to derive significant findings from study data in the absence of legitimate measurements, and it is impossible to draw precise conclusions about the constructs being assessed in the absence of appropriate measures. Therefore, while planning research investigations and choosing which measurements or instruments to utilize, researchers must carefully examine both validity and reliability (Heale & Twycross, 2015). The specialists from various colleges and institutions assessed the questionnaire's validity. The recommendations are considered and adjusted as needed. Additionally, the research questionnaire's items matched the career choices of the pupils.

Reliability

The reliability was found by applying Cronbach Alpha reliability method by using SPSS version 16. That was given in table below.

Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients

Table 1.1: Alpha Reliability coefficient of student's career choice

S.N	Subscale	N	Alpha Coefficient
1	Family	5	7.79
2	School	5	7.23
4	Personality	7	6.71

The Alpha reliability coefficient of the variables influencing the students' career choice is shown in Table 3.2. A closed-ended survey was modified based on relevant literature and verified by various specialists. Alpha value for the whole amount is .843. The results revealed a substantial alpha coefficient for each of the FAQ subscales. According to Akrouf et al. (2015), the subscale reliability coefficients have values ranging from .52 to .81.

Data Collection

After requesting formal permission and a covering letter from the relevant authorities, the researcher personally collected the data for this study through a survey. After going into field, the researcher first met with the principals of the schools to get permission for data collection. After getting the permission, the researcher distributed the instrument to the convenience sample of the population for data collection.

The researcher went to a Rawalpindi secondary schools in person to gather data from respondents. The questionnaire was used by researchers to gather data.

Data Analysis

Regarding data collection, the gathered information was undergo analysis using SPSS software, specifically with the assistance of version 21 of the package. The data was organized in tables and interpreted using percentages, frequency as well as the mean and standard deviation. Subsequently, the findings were drawn and interpreted within the context of this study.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this section, researchers analysed the data and deduced the outcomes into four categories. First classification embodies demographics information, second category embodies information related the career selection while the third section includes details about factors (School, family, gender and personality) influencing the career choice at secondary level and the fourth category embodies the extra factors which influence the career trajectory of an individual. Descriptive research and survey methods are employed by the researcher. A self-made questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire has passed a test for accurate information deduction by the experts. The demographics related to reliability give encouraging numbers and ALPHA level of the variables. The survey method approach is adopted to increase the Authentify the level of research. IBM SPSS 2020 was involved in better analysis of the upshot of questionnaire. Detailed information regarding objectives, research questions and statically test are given.

Demographics Attributes

Information about multi-variable demographics is mentioned in this section. Demographics information encompasses the details regarding the gender sector, educational sector, family and personal sectors.

Table 1.2: Gender, Grade and Age Wise Demographic Distribution

Category	Distribution	Frequency	Percentage
Grade	Female	207	53%
	9 th	180	47%
	10 th	204	53%
Age	14	82	21%
	15	121	32%
	16	149	39%
	Others	32	8%

The gender wise division of students is shown in table number 1.3 where male 171 (47%) and female 207(53%) secondary level students were participated in the current study as well as it show grade wise demographics of students in 9th and 10th grade secondary school students. 180 (47%) secondary school students from 9th grade and 204(53%) secondary school students from 10th grade was participated in the current studies and contained the demographics of age wise secondary school students. Where's students under 14 years' age are 82 (21%), students under 15-year age are 121(32%), students under 16-year age are 149(39%) and others are 32(8%) were respectively participated in current study.

Table 1.3: Locality and Support in Education of Students

Category	Distribution	Frequency	Percentage
Locality	Urban	275	72%
	Rural	109	28%
Support in education	Father	255	66%

Mother	103	27%
Elder Siblings	9	2%
Others	17	5%

Table 1.3 show demographic of locality wise secondary school students Where it is demonstrated that locality under urban 275(72%) locality under ruler 109(28%) were participated in the current studies as well as it also shows the demographics of support in education of secondary school students. Where's 255(66%) support from father, 103(27%) support from mother, 9(2%) support from elder brother and 17(5%) from other were participated in the current studies.

Table 1.4: Subject and Parents Qualification of the Students

Category	Distribution	Frequency	Percentage
Subject	Science	223	58%
	Arts	143	37%
	Humanities	18	4%
Parents qualification	Under graduate	135	35
	Graduate	134	34
	Uneducated	75	19
	Others	40	10

Above table show the subject wise demography of secondary school students. 223(58%) secondary school students from science group, 143(37%) from arts groups and 18(4%) secondary school students from humanities group were participated in the current studies as well as Shows the subject wise demography of secondary school students. 223(58%) secondary school students as 135(35%) were undergraduate and 134(34%) were graduate as well as 75(19%) were uneducated and 40(10%) were others

Table 1.5: Impact of Family on student's career choice

Sr. No	Statements Family	Responses							Mean	S.D
		F&%	SA	A	UN	D	SD			
1	The economic status of family plays a part in choosing a career.	F	178	136	26	23	20	4.10	1.63	
		%	46.4	35.4	6.8	6.0	5.2			
2	The most followed profession in My family helped my selected career.	F	101	274	5	3	1	4.22	1.99	
		%	26.3	71.4	1.3	.8	.3			
3	Work experience of my siblings helped me in my decision.	F	125	194	50	7	8	3.78	1.88	
		%	32.6	50.5	13.0	1.8	2.1			
4	Parental support gave me confidence in my choice.	F	37	275	68	3	1	3.89	.26	
		%	9.6	71.6	17.7	.8	.3			
5	Career guidance from parents helped me in cleaning my doubts.	F	17	331	30	2	4	3.92	.87	
		%	4.4	86.2	8.3	.5	.6			

The data in table above reflects that (71.4, 26.3%) of the respondents showed their strong agreement with the statement of economics status of their family plays an important role in choosing their career. Furthermore, about slightly above then one-third (1.3, 2.67) of the respondent showed their strong disagreement for the above statement. As well as most of the students (71.6, 86.2 and 32.6% of the respondent showed their strong agreement that work experience of their siblings helped them in their careers decisions also parental support gave them confidence as well as career guidance from their parents helped them in cleaning their doubts. Furthermore, most (2.90, 2.10, 1.29, 1.61% of the respondent showed their strong disagreement for the above statements.

The result shows that family affect greatly in the career choices of the students as the positive feedback of the parents enhance student's inner motivation and as a result they perform better than those who do not receive positive feedback from their parents.

Table 1.6: Impact of School on student's career choice

Sr. No	Statements School	Responses						Mean	S.D
		F&%	SA	A	UN	D	SD		
1	Counselling from my teachers assisted me greatly.	F 22 % 5.7	300 78.0	50 13.0	1 .3	11 3.1	3.83	1.26	
2	The environment of school affected my career choice.	F 46 % 12.0	304 79.2	28 7.3	1 .3	5 1.3	4.00	.83	
3	The subject I studied bended my career aspirations to a specific direction.	F 84 % 21.9	200 54.1	80 21.1	4 .8	16 2.1	3.86	1.35	
4	My selected career is up to my interest and curiosity.	F 13 % 3.2	300 81.8	50 12.1	3 .7	18 2.2	3.74	1.09	
5	Past habits and experiences shaped my career aims.	F 9 % 2.3	301 77.3	54 14.1	1 .3	19 6.0	3.72	.34	

The data in above table reflect that most (78.0, 82.8, 52.26 and 56.2%) of the respondent showed their strong agreement with the statements that counselling from their teachers assisted them greatly and the environment of their school affected their career choices as well as past habits and their experiences shaped their career choices and their selected career is up to their interests and curiosity. Furthermore (0.97, 1.61 and 3.1 %) of the respondent reflects their strong disagreement with the above statements that counselling from their teachers do not affect their career choices.

The results show that school plays an important role in making career decisions of the students as the positive environment of the school and positive feedback from the teacher as well as academic aspirations have great positive influence on someone careers choices.

Table 1.8: Impact of Personality on student's career choice

Sr. No	Statements Personality	Responses						Mean	S.D
		F&%	SA	A	UN	D	SD		
1	Personal values influence the career aspirations.	F 61 % 15.9	232 60.4	55 14.3	32 8.3	4 1.0	3.81	.87	
2	Plans and perceptions affect my career ambitions.	F 16 % 4.2	286 74.5	48 12.5	13 3.4	21 5.5	3.68	1.93	
3		F 26 % 6.6	307 77.3	38 9.7	2 .5	11 2.8	3.87	.54	

Sr. No	Statements Personality	Responses						Mean	S.D
		F&%	SA	A	UN	D	SD		
4	Motivation from family and relatives help me to progress.	%	6.8	79.9	9.9	.5	2.9	3.96	.98
	Personal esteem and dignity play a part in bending my career mind-set.	F	63	262	49	4	6		
5	Academic achievements and grades affect my professional outlooks.	%	16.4	68.2	12.8	1.0	1.6	3.85	1.46
	Talents and skills are the reason that I have preferred this career.	F	28	298	44	4	10		
6	Personal values impact the career aspirations.	%	7.3	80.2	10.1	1.0	1.4	3.80	.73
	Personal values impact the career aspirations.	F	13	300	57	12	2		
7	Personal values impact the career aspirations.	%	3.4	78.1	14.8	3.1	.5	3.79	1.37
	Personal values impact the career aspirations.	F	19	295	43	25	2		

The data in above table reflects that (60.4, 74.5, 80.2, and 68.2%) of the respondent showed their strong agreements with the statements that personal values impact their career aspirations and future plans and perceptions affect their career ambitions as well as motivation from family and relatives helped them to progress and personal esteem and dignity play a part in bending their career mind-set. Furthermore, most (78.1, 76.8 and 47.42%) of the respondents showed their strong agreement with the statements that academic achievement and grades affects their professional outlook and talents and skills are the reason that they preferred their career as well as personal values impact their career aspirations. Likewise, one-third (3.87, 3.1 and 6.5%) of the respondent showed their strong disagreement with the above statements assisted them greatly and the environment of their school do not affect their career choices.

The result shows that the inner values of someone has great effect of their career choices as well as their self-esteem, dignity, talent and skills motivates them for making their future career and its positive impacts improve their academic goals.

QUALITATIVE PART OF DATA ANALYSIS

A questionnaire comprising of both open-ended questions and closed-ended questions was used for data collection. Two open-ended questions were asked from the respondents to get more accurate results about other factors affecting career choice of the students. First question that were asked is Q1: Among the aspects of the career choice (Family, School, Gender and Personality), which factor directed you the most in the right direction in your expedition and which feature paved the way towards the career of interest for you and your capital career? And the second question is Q2. Apart from Gender, Personality, School and Family, what other factors influence the ongoing career trajectory of Secondary students? For this purpose, themes and sub-themes were generated. The detailed qualitative part of data analysis is described below.

Themes and Sub Themes for Open-Ended Questions

Table 1.8: Feature paved the way towards the career of interest.

Major themes	Sub themes	Respondents agreed with the construct	Percentage
Extrinsic factors	Family	243	60%
	School	51	15%
	Gender	16	7%
	Personality	74	12%

Total	4	384	100%
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Major themes and sub themes were generated in the above table. Extrinsic factors like, family, school, gender and personality have great influence on student's career choice. The first open-ended question for most affecting factors was: Among the aspects of the career choice (Family, School, Gender and Personality), which factor directed you the most in the right direction in your expedition and which feature paved the way towards the career of interest for you and your capital career? Majority of students were responded that factors such as family, gender and personality affect their career. The result shows that majority of the respondents were agreed that family and personality affected mostly their career choice.

Table 1.9: Factors influence the ongoing career trajectory.

Major themes	Sub themes	Respondents agreed with the construct	Percentage
Intrinsic factors	Personal interest	28	10%
Extrinsic factors	Teachers	38	14%
	Friends	123	32%
	Peers	50	7%
	Media	145	37%
Total	5	384	100%

Major themes and sub themes were generated in the above table. Peers (peers give reliable and trustworthy information, peers' selected career and their company) and teachers (teachers' inspiration, qualification, teaching methods, teaching techniques and information given by teachers). The second open-ended question for most affecting factors was: Apart from Gender, Personality, School and Family, what other factors influence the ongoing career trajectory of Secondary students? For the second open-ended question, major themes and sub themes were generated. Media academic reasons Family Peers Teachers Personal interest they believe that talented students and students with high ambitions can move progressively in their life, no matter whatever their gender. Academic reasons such as secondary school marks and admission criteria of college etc. affect students' career choices. Majority of students were responded that all other factors such as family, peers and teachers affect their career. The result shows that majority of the respondents were agreed that media and friends affected mostly their career choice.

FINDINGS

- The findings of this study as presented in Table above showed that parents influence their child's choice of career with the grand mean 3.89. It revealed that students consider the financial and educational background of their parents while making a career choice. In line with these findings, Hewitt(2010) found that most students are subjective to careers that their parents favours. Contributing, Ukwueze 20 and Obiefuna (2017) noted that the socio-economic status and learning background of parents influence the children's choice of career.
- The finding of this study showed that school is one of the important factor that influence students career choice of the students. The findings of this study as presented in Table above revealed that counselling from the parents of students assisted them greatly as well as the environment of the school affected their career choice. This

finding corresponds with the findings of Akosah-twumasi, Emeto, Lindsay, Tsey, and Malau-Aduli(2018). These authors found that society influences the way people work, the way they make decisions about work, and how their career paths are shaped.

- The findings of this study showed that the personality influence greatly of societal culture on career choice between male and female students. These findings supported the findings of Cheung and Arnold (2014). These authors reported that peers are a branch of the significant others and as social agents, they exert influence on the student through social comparisons and acceptance. The findings of this study showed that family plays an important role for helping in career of interest.

The personalities, interests, abilities, aptitudes and aspirations of students serve as foundations for their future careers. Students with good socio-economic status can pursue their career aspirations and those with low socio-economic status are unable to fulfill their desired career aspirations. The family and siblings also influence the career choices of students because they are a source of guidance, financial support and are role models for the young ones of the family and they follow them in the choice of their careers. The attitude, trends, culture, traditions, religion, norms and values of the society significantly affect the career choices of the students. Male students are more influenced by their personalities and socio-economic status in the choice of their careers because they are comparatively more independent as compared to females in making their career choice decisions and they are also the supposed future bread winners for their families. Similarly, Salami (2008) found the factors of personality, socioeconomic status and extended family significantly influencing the career aspirations of youth in secondary schools. Such findings have also been reported by Kerka (2000); Edwards and Quinter (2011), Swift (2009) and Salami (2008) who identified personality, family, parents, siblings, type of family, society, culture and economy which play their influential role in the career development of the individuals. The Social Cognitive Career Choice Theory (SCCT) by Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994) is also based on the inter-relationship of personal, environmental and behavioral factors for the career selection and development of the individual.

CONCLUSION

The result of the study displays the complexity regarding the factors affecting the career choice of students at secondary level. This study only accounts the factors mainly Family, School, and Personality. Which factor is the most influential and how it shapes the trajectory of career selection. This study enables the caretaking societal elements to guide the students to go through the process of career selection. The most influential factor is the Family. The study gains insight into the diverse array of career paths that secondary school students in Rawalpindi are considering or aspiring towards. By identifying these choices, educators, policymakers, and career counselors can tailor resources and support systems to address the specific needs and interests of students, thereby facilitating informed decision-making. By delving into the various factors influencing career decisions, this study provides a nuanced understanding of the complexities involved in shaping students' vocational aspirations. Factors such as familial expectations, socioeconomic background, personal interests, academic performance, and societal influences emerge as crucial determinants. Recognizing these factors allows for the development of targeted interventions to empower students in navigating and overcoming potential barriers to their desired career paths. The study also sheds light on any disparities or variations in career choice factors between male and female students in Rawalpindi. By analyzing specific influences, such as societal norms, cultural expectations, or access to resources, the study highlights areas where gender equity in career guidance may be lacking. Addressing these disparities is essential for fostering inclusive career development opportunities that cater to the diverse needs and aspirations of all students, regardless of gender.

The study uncovers the strategies employed by secondary school students in Rawalpindi to navigate the complex process of selecting a career path. These strategies, ranging from seeking mentorship to conducting research and exploring practical experiences, provide valuable insights into effective approaches for facilitating informed decision-making. Understanding these strategies equips educators and career counselors with tools to better support students in navigating their career journeys. In conclusion, the research collectively contribute to a holistic understanding of career decision-making among secondary school students in Rawalpindi. By identifying career choices, investigating influencing factors, comparing and identifying decision-making strategies, the study provides valuable insights that can inform targeted interventions, policies, and programs aimed at empowering students in making informed and fulfilling career decisions. Ultimately, such efforts contribute to the holistic development and well-being of students as they transition into the workforce and pursue their professional aspirations.

RECOMMENDATION

On the bases of findings following recommendations were drawn:

- Curriculum should be shaped according to the factors that are most prominent in affecting the career inclinations of individuals.
- Teacher should be taught the art of career counselling, and they should guide the students at the best of their knowledge. A proper training procedure should be initiated to entrust career counselling to the teachers.
- Along with the curricular and extra-curricular activities, the students should attend sessions of career counselling to shape their career trajectory.
- Teachers should treat every student equally disregarding gender-based differences.
- Students should be exposed to career guiding environments like job expos, seminars and workshops. Internships should be offered at these events so that practical knowledge comes into play.
- Online platforms should be embarked on for the sole purpose of career counselling. Each platform should comprise of information regarding the variations of the job market and the ups and downs of the market's trend.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- This research was limited to secondary level and so limiting the collection of data which can be overcome by filling in higher secondary and university students.
- This research was geographically limited only to the city of Rawalpindi. Future research proposals should cover a broader geographical span like provisional and district-based research.
- Samples are mostly made to factor in the students. Future research can include teachers and other professionals for the effective collection of data.
- This research is mostly considering the dynamics of public schooling system and future research can be expanded to the private institutions.

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