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Factors Motivating Career Choice of Students Studying in Select Colleges with Reference to Coimbatore District

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I. INTRODUCTION

Career choices play a big part in shaping the future course of learners. Decisions made during the phase of transition from schooling to higher education considerably influence their psychological well-being, socio-economic stability, and professional success. Recognizing these stakes, this research examines the inspirations driving career decisions among college learners in Coimbatore. Its focus on intrinsic, extrinsic, and interpersonal inspirations gives a multidimensional perspective, stressing the intersection of individual aspirations and external influences.

Study Objectives:
To study the factors motivating career choice of students studying in select colleges in Coimbatore district.
The research centers on identifying key elements affecting learners' career selections:
• Evaluating the part of industry, university, and marketing elements in shaping inspirations.
• Assessing the effect of these inspirations on career decisions.
The emphasis on Coimbatore district adds a localized comprehension, helpful for institutions and policymakers in similar educational contexts.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Snyder and Slauson (2014) investigated the reasons influencing students' choice of an information systems major. They reported that students' choices are driven by their personal interest in the major, the employment outlook, and industry salary levels.

2.2 Carnasciali et al. (2013) reported survey-based findings showing that gender and level of parental educational achievement constituted two key factors influencing students' choice of career path and that the vast majority of students had made their choice prior to searching for potential educational institutions.
The research integrates theoretical models such as Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), which suggests that career development is influenced by self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations, and career goals. This aligns with Carpenter and Foster's classification of influencing elements: intrinsic (personal interests), extrinsic (recognition, financial stability), and interpersonal (social influences). Prior studies reinforce the multifactorial nature of career selections — Snyder and Slauson (2014) emphasize personal interests and industry outlook; Carnasciali et al. (2013) highlight gender and parental education. The article extends these insights by categorizing elements into industry, university, and marketing domains.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study uses a descriptive research design focusing on detailed examination of influencing elements and their relationships. Population: Students from 20 colleges in Coimbatore (10 engineering and 10 arts and science institutions).Sample Size: 140 respondents, selected via simple random sampling. Data Collection: Structured questionnaire and secondary data. Statistical Tools: Percentage analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis.

IV. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

The demographic and statistical outcomes are summarised below.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N=140)

Sl. No.	Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Age	18–21 years / More than 21 years	46 / 94	32.9 / 67.1
2	Gender	Male / Female	64 / 76	45.7 / 54.3
3	Stream of Education	Arts / Science / Engineering	42 / 23 / 75	30.0 / 16.4 / 53.6
4	Monthly Family Income	Less than ₹25,000 / ₹25,000–₹50,000 / More than ₹50,000	48 / 62 / 30	34.3 / 44.3 / 21.4

Source: Survey data compiled by the researcher (N=140)

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, and Correlation Analysis

Variables	Mean (M)	SD	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Correlation with Career Choice (r)
Career Choice	3.40	0.802	0.885	1.000
Industry Factor	2.88	0.619	0.836	0.592**
University Factor	3.33	0.860	0.802	0.560**
Marketing Factor	3.60	0.774	0.710	0.523**
Motivation	4.15	1.211	0.860	0.300**

Correlation significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3: Regression Analysis Showing Influencing Factors on Student Career Choice

Model	Dependent Variable	Independent Variable(s)	B	S.E.	t (Sig.)	R	R^2	Adj. R^2
Model 1	Motivation	Industry / University / Marketing Factors	0.355 / 0.514 / 0.440	0.083 / 0.092 / 0.105	4.26 / 5.57 / 4.18 (0.000)	0.721	0.520	0.509
Model 2	Career Choice	Motivation	0.418	0.049	8.63 (0.000)	0.592	0.350	0.346

Interpretation: There is a strong positive relationship between industry, university, and marketing factors and motivation (R=0.721). Motivation also significantly impacts student career choice (R=0.592).

V. FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Demographic Understandings

Key outcomes from the demographic examination include:

Age: 67.1% of respondents are over 21 years, indicating a mature sample likely to have clearer career aspirations.

Gender: Female learners (54.3%) slightly outnumber males (45.7%), offering balanced gender representation.

Streams of Study: Engineering dominates (53.6%), followed by arts (30%) and science (16.4%), reflecting trends in professional and academic preferences.

Family Income: Most learners (44.3%) come from middle-income families (₹25,000–₹50,000/month), emphasizing socio-economic influences.

Motivating Factors

Intrinsic Motivation: Personal interests and alignment with professional parts were primary drivers.
Extrinsic Motivation: Security and recognition held substantial sway, stressing practical aspects.
Interpersonal Motivation: Family and peer influences played a crucial part, particularly during initial decision-making.
Influencing Factors
Industry Factor: Students valued placement with industry needs and career growth potential. However, it had the lowest mean score (2.88), indicating room for betterment.
University Factor: The standard of education, facilities, and placements emerged as top priorities (mean: 3.33).
Marketing Factor: Institutional branding and reputation considerably influenced decisions (mean: 3.60).

Statistical Correlations
Strong Positive Relationships: Found between inspiration and career selection ($r = 0.592$, $p < 0.01$).
Moderate Correlations: Marketing elements demonstrated moderate yet significant effects on inspiration and career decisions.
Regression Analysis
Model 1 (Influencing Factors and Motivation):
Industry, university, and marketing elements explained 52% of the variance in inspiration.
University elements had the highest beta coefficient (0.514), indicating the solidest effect.
Model 2 (Motivation and Career Choice):
Motivation explained 35% of the variance in career selection, confirming its crucial part.

VI. DISCUSSION

Educational institutions should strengthen facilities and placement services while enhancing institutional marketing. Students and families must balance intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, while policymakers should focus on equitable educational access. The study’s inclusion of marketing factors introduces a novel perspective compared to previous works such as Snyder and Slauson (2014).

VII. LIMITATIONS

The sample size (N=140) limits generalizability. The geographic focus on Coimbatore may not reflect national patterns, and reliance on quantitative analysis may overlook qualitative insights.
8. Recommendations
• Extend research to other regions for comparative insights.
• Conduct longitudinal tracking to study evolving motivations.
• Include interviews and focus groups for deeper understanding.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The research provides a robust understanding of elements influencing career decisions. By linking intrinsic, extrinsic, and interpersonal motivations with institutional and industry factors, it offers actionable insights for educators and policymakers. Future research should broaden geographic coverage and include qualitative data to enrich findings.

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