ACADEMIA International Journal for Social Sciences
Volume 5, Issue 3(s4), 2026 ISSN-L (Online): 3006-6638

Analyzing Career Decision-Making: Factors Affecting Students at the Public Colleges, South Punjab

Kainat Mehtab
kainatmehtab13@gmail.com
M.Phil Scholar, Department of Education, The Women University, Multan, Punjab, Pakistan.

Dr. Romena Ali
rominaali0900@gmail.com
Assistant Professor, NCBA & E Multan, Pakistan.

Dr. Darakhshan Siraj
darakhshan.siraj@iub.edu.pk
Lecturer, Department of Education, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.
ORCID: https://orcid.org/0009-0000-3867-659X

Corresponding Author: Kainat Mehtab kainatmehtab13@gmail.com

Received: 08-02-2026 **Revised:** 23-02-2026 **Accepted:** 10-03-2026 **Published:** 24-03-2026

ABSTRACT

This research study aimed to investigate the factors influencing career choice among college students in Taunsa Sharif, located in the Division of Dera Ghazi Khan, South Punjab, Pakistan. The total students representing population of 2,856, a sample of 220 was selected using a stratified random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was the method used by the researcher to collect quantitative data. The descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the analysis of data, which consisted of Mean, Standard Deviation, ANOVA, and independent samples t-tests. The results indicate that career guidance and counseling services in colleges are essential to help students make informed career decisions. The findings highlight the need for educational institutions to provide structured career support to prepare students for future academic and professional paths.

Keywords: *Career choice; Career decision-making; College education; Career guidance; South Punjab*

INTRODUCTION

In today's modern world, choosing a career is one of the most important decisions a person makes in life. For high school students, this decision can significantly influence their future development. However, career choice is not simply a personal decision it is also shaped by various social and personal factors. Therefore, studying the factors that influence students' career choices is an important topic that requires special attention (Bùi, 2024).

Choosing a career is a crucial stage in every student's life. Before making this decision, students must consider multiple factors. A career choice has long-term effects on an individual's life, influencing future income, type of work, personality, behavior, and outlook on life. A single wrong choice can have lasting negative consequences. Making a career choice is, therefore, challenging for most people (Kazi et al., 2017). A career can be defined as a job or profession that allows self-discovery, self-expression, and self-assertion (Getange & Sagwe, 2016).

Decision-making is the process of selecting a preferred option or action from among alternatives, based on specific criteria or strategies. In some cases, decisions are made based on intuition or personal feelings,

which can be influenced by suggestions, external factors, and psychological aspects. Intuitive decision-making is often faster but is usually applied to problems of limited impact (Wang & Ruhe, 2017).

Career choice has always been a difficult decision for secondary-level students, as it determines the profession they intend to pursue. Students often face challenges in aligning their preferences with their academic performance and abilities. Choosing the right combination of subjects, courses, and career paths can make the difference between satisfaction and dissatisfaction in future professional life (Koech et al., 2016).

At the College level, students choose subjects and courses that will shape their future careers. Selecting subjects that match their interests, aptitudes, and available career opportunities can help ensure a suitable career path. Therefore, making the right career choice at this stage is critical for secondary school students (Watson et al., 2010).

The present study is grounded in Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), which focuses on understanding the processes through which individuals achieve success in both educational and occupational pursuits (Lent et al., 1994). SCCT proposes that personal cognitive variables, particularly self-efficacy beliefs, interact with environmental factors such as social support and contextual barriers to shape career interests, goals, and actions (Lent & Brown, 2013). For college students in resource-constrained settings like South Punjab, SCCT offers a useful lens because it explains how limited access to career information and social support can constrain perceived options and delay goal clarity (Wang et al., 2026).

Problem Statement

Career decision-making among college students is a complex process influenced by multiple personal, social, and institutional factors. In regions such as South Punjab, Pakistan, students face unique challenges when making career choices due to limited access to career guidance, cultural expectations, and socioeconomic constraints. Despite the importance of this decision for students' future academic and professional success, many lack adequate support systems, resulting in uninformed or externally pressured career decisions. Existing research in Pakistan has predominantly focused on urban or higher education settings, leaving a gap in understanding the specific influences on students at the College level in rural and semi-urban areas like Taunsa Sharif and Vehova. This study seeks to address this gap by identifying and analyzing the factors that influence career choices among college students in these regions.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are expected to contribute to educational policy and practice by highlighting the specific personal, familial, social, and institutional factors affecting career decision-making among college students in South Punjab. By identifying these influences, the research can guide colleges, policymakers, and counselors in designing targeted career guidance programs tailored to students' needs. It will also help address disparities between rural and urban students, as well as gender-related differences in career choice patterns. Furthermore, this study adds to the limited body of literature on career decision-making in Pakistani college, particularly in under-researched districts, and can serve as a reference for future comparative or intervention-based studies.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate the factors influencing students' decisions about their careers at public college.

2. To evaluate the influence of students' socioeconomic background, which includes family income and education, on their job choices at college.

3. To ascertain how students' career decisions are impacted by resources, programs, and career counseling services at colleges.

Research Questions

1. What are the primary factors influencing career choices among students at college?

2. How do personal interests and passions guide students in selecting their career paths at colleges?

3. What role does socioeconomic background play in determining the career choices of students at college?

4. How do career guidance services influence students' career decisions at colleges?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

Career decision-making self-efficacy (CDMSE) refers to an individual's belief in their ability to effectively make career decisions throughout the decision-making process, encompassing self-evaluation, information gathering, goal selection, career planning, and problem solving (Taylor & Betz, 1983; Wang et al., 2026). Students with higher CDMSE are more likely to engage in systematic career exploration and set clearer career goals (Kvaskova et al., 2023).

Career social support (CSS) involves the emotional, instrumental, and informational assistance from parents, teachers, peers, and broader social networks that empowers individuals to make informed career decisions (Hou et al., 2010; Jiang, 2016). Unlike general social support, CSS is task-specific and directly targets career-relevant tasks.

Career goals (CG) represent an individual's process of setting clear objectives for engaging in specific career-related behaviors and achieving desired outcomes (Lent et al., 1994). Goal-setting theory further establishes that well-defined goals possess a motivational function, they transform needs into directed action (Locke & Latham, 1990).

Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making

Career decision-making has been widely studied in education research, with emphasis on how personal, social, and institutional factors shape students' choices. According to Kazi and Akhlaq (2017), students often struggle to align their career preferences with their abilities and academic performance. Similarly, Getange and Sagwe (2016) found that a lack of career guidance leads many students to make decisions based on incomplete or inaccurate information. These alignment difficulties are, at their core, a manifestation of low career decision-making self-efficacy, when students lack confidence in their ability to evaluate options and make career-related choices, they are more susceptible to external pressures and incomplete information (Lam & Santos, 2018).

Furthermore, Watson et al. (2010) argued that choosing appropriate school subjects is critical for setting the right career path, as early subject choices can influence both higher education opportunities and future

job options. In addition, social influences such as family expectations, peer advice, and cultural norms can strongly affect decision-making, sometimes pushing students toward careers that do not match their interests. This process of subject selection and its consequences for career trajectories is consistent with SCCT's proposition that early self-efficacy beliefs and outcome expectations shape the range of career options students consider as attainable (Lent et al., 1994).

Institutional factors also play a significant role. For example, Nguyen and Brown (2023) reported that access to career counseling programs, mentorship opportunities, and practical exposure to various professions increases students' confidence in their career decisions. Similarly, Narayanan et al. (2023) highlighted that supportive school environments help students explore diverse options and make more informed choices. These findings are supported by recent evidence that school-based career support increases career decision-making self-efficacy, which in turn reduces career doubt and clarifies goals (Cheung, 2024; Wang et al., 2026)

In summary, the literature suggests that career decision-making among college students is shaped by a combination of individual preferences, social pressures, and institutional support systems. These findings underline the importance of providing students with accurate information, adequate guidance, and opportunities for self-assessment before they make long-term career commitments.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design was quantitative and descriptive. The research methodology that was employed to collect data to address the research question

Population and Sample

The population of the present investigation included twenty-eight hundred fifty-six (N = 2856) regular students studying at the College level from four public colleges, Taunsa Sharif and nearby area in Division, Dera Ghazi Khan, South Punjab, Pakistan, including Govt Associate College of Commerce, Taunsa Sharif, Govt Graduate College for Women, Taunsa Sharif, Govt Graduate College, Vehova, and Govt Associate College (women), Vehova. According to the resources and time, the sample was drawn from four public Colleges, and different departments were selected randomly.

Sampling techniques

A stratified random sampling was made for sampling. Similarly, a sample of two hundred and twenty students (N= 220), including one hundred and fifteen males (M, 115) and one hundred and five females (F, 105), was chosen. Conveniently, this research can be finished by a few departments within the students of the Arts and Sciences.

Instrument of the study

The research questionnaire included two sections: the respondent's demographic information (age, gender, parental education, field of study, and location) was focused on Section A. The questionnaire consisted of 25 items adapted from the Questionnaire were selected by using a Likert scale to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement between 1 and 5 on a scale of (1) strongly disagree; (2) disagree; (3) neutral; (4) agree; (5) strongly agree. Students who expressed interest in taking part were all chosen. Their ages fell between sixteen and nineteen years old.

Reliability and Validity of instrument

The reliability of the questionnaire was tested using Cronbach's Alpha. The 25-item questionnaire obtained a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.89, indicating a high level of internal consistency and reliability. Furthermore, the instrument was validated through expert review to ensure that the items were clear, relevant, and aligned with the objectives of the study.

Ethical considerations

Ensuring the integrity of the study required careful consideration of ethical issues. For the interviewees, there were no moral or ethical dilemmas related to the study's topic. Every ethical criterion was adhered to in this investigation. Before collecting any data, the researcher gained the confidence of all the students who were participants in the study by explaining its goals. Convenience time was decided with students for the data collection. Stress that taking part in the study is entirely up to you, and that students are free to leave at any time without consequences. Strive for a diverse and representative sample to avoid biases in the study's findings. Provide debriefing sessions after data collection to address any concerns, clarify misunderstandings, and ensure participants leave with a clear understanding of the study's objectives.

Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of participants and their responses to the questionnaire items. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to examine differences in career decision-making factors based on gender, grade level, location, and field of study. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to assess variations across age groups, parental education levels, and family income categories. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section begins by presenting the demographic characteristics of the participants, followed by detailed analyses of the factors influencing career decision-making, including personal interest and aptitude, family influence, peer and social influence, educational influence, and personal values and goals. Descriptive statistics are used to provide an overview of participants' perceptions, while inferential analyses, including t-tests and ANOVA, are applied to explore significant differences across demographic variables. The results are presented in APA-formatted tables, accompanied by interpretations that focus on their implications for enhancing career guidance practices at the College level. The discussion integrates these findings with existing literature, highlighting similarities, differences, and potential explanations for observed patterns.

Table No. 1

Participants' Gender-Wise Percentage and Frequency

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	115	52.3

Female	105	47.7
Total	**220**	**100.0**

Table 1 indicates that there were 115 male participants, comprising 52.3% of the total, and 105 female participants, comprising 47.7% of the total.

Table No. 2

Participants' Age-Wise Percentage and Frequency

Age Groups	**Frequency**	**Percent**
16-17	115	52.3
18–19	72	32.7
Above 19	33	15.0
Total	**220**	**100.0**

Table 2 displays the age distribution of the 220 students who participated in the study. There were 115 participants aged 16–17, representing 52.3% of the total; 72 participants aged 18–19, constituting 32.7% of the total; and 33 participants aged 20 and above, accounting for 15% of the total.

Table No. 3

Participants' Grade-Wise Percentage and Frequency

Grade	**Frequency**	**Percent**
11th	80	36.4
12th	140	63.6
Total	**220**	**100.0**

Table 3 indicates that there were 80 participants from the 11th grade, comprising 36.4% of the total, and 140 participants from the 12th grade, which was 63.6% of the total.

Table No. 4

Participants' Field of Study- Wise Percentage and Frequency

Field of Study	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Science	201	91.4

Arts	19	8.6
Total	**220**	**100.0**

Table 4 indicates that there were 201 participants from the science field of study, comprising 91.4% of the total, and 19 participants from the arts field of study, which was 8.6% of the total.

Table No. 5

Participants' Fathers' Education - Wise Percentage and Frequency

Father Education	Frequency	Percent
Primary	75	34.1
Secondary	66	30.0
Graduate	51	23.2
Post Graduate	28	12.7
Total	**220**	**100.0**

Table 5 presents the fathers' education of the 220 students who took part in the study. There were 75 participants whose father's education was primary, comprising 34.1% of the total; 66 participants whose father's education was secondary, comprising 30% of the total; 51 participants whose father's education was graduation, comprising 23.2% of the total; and 28 participants whose father's education was postgraduate, comprising 12.7% of the total.

Table No. 6

Participants' Mothers' Education - Wise Percentage and Frequency

Mother education	Frequency	Percent
Primary	125	56.8
Secondary	59	26.8
Graduate	28	12.7
Post Graduate	8	3.6
Total	**220**	**100.0**

Table 6 presents the mothers' education of the 220 students who took part in the study. There were 125 participants whose mother's education was primary, comprising 56.8% of the total; 59 participants whose mother's education was secondary, comprising 26.8% of the total; 28 participants whose mother's education was graduation, comprising 12.7% of the total; and 8 participants whose mother's education was postgraduate, comprising 3.6% of the total.

Table No. 7

Participants' Family Income - Wise Percentage and Frequency

Family Income	Frequency	Percent
Low Income	44	20.0
Middle	170	77.3
High Income	6	2.7
Total	**220**	**100.0**

Table 7 presents the family income of the 220 students who took part in the study. There were 44 participants whose family income was low, comprising 20% of the total; 170 participants whose family income was middle, comprising 77.3% of the total; and 6 participants whose family income was high, comprising 2.7% of the total.

Table No. 8

Participants' location - Wise Percentage and Frequency

Location	Frequency	Percent
Urban	116	52.7
Rural	104	47.3
Total	**220**	**100.0**

Table 8 showed that there were 116 urban resident participants, representing 52.7% of the total, and 104 rural resident participants, representing 47.3% of the total.

Table No. 9

Participants' Perception Regarding Personal Interest and Aptitude

	Statements		SA	A	N	DA	SDA	M	SD
1	I select a career based on my interests and passions.	*f*	125	48	33	4	10	4.25	1.07
		%	56.8	21.8	15.0	1.8	4.5		
2	My skills and abilities play a vital role in my career decision-making process.	*f*	114	64	28	6	8	4.23	1.01
		%	51.8	29.1	12.7	2.7	3.6		

3	I feel confident in my understanding of what I am good at when selecting a career.	*f* %	115 52.3	65 29.5	27 12.3	8 3.6	5 2.3	4.26	.97
4	Personal career assumptions affected your career decision	*f* %	88 40.0	56 25.5	44 20.0	21 9.5	11 5.0	3.86	1.19
5	Academic progress/ratings influenced your career choice	*f* %	99 45.0	66 30.0	26 11.8	17 7.7	12 5.5	4.01	1.17
	Total							**4.12**	**1.08**

Table 9 presents the mean and standard deviation scores for the Personal Interest and Aptitude factor. The results reveal that the highest mean score was recorded for Statement 3 (M = 4.26, SD = 0.97), indicating that most respondents feel confident in understanding their strengths and abilities when selecting a career. This was closely followed by Statement 1 (M = 4.25, SD = 1.07), which suggests that respondents strongly consider their interests and passions in making career decisions. Statement 2 also obtained a high mean score (M = 4.23, SD = 1.01), showing that participants believe their skills and abilities play a vital role in their career decision-making process. Meanwhile, the lowest mean score was observed in Statement 4 (M = 3.86, SD = 1.19), indicating comparatively lower agreement regarding the influence of personal career assumptions on career decisions, although the response still reflects general agreement. Overall, the findings suggest that personal interests, self-confidence, and perceived abilities significantly influence participants' career choices.

Table No. 10

Participants' Perception Regarding Family Influence

	Statements		SA	A	N	DA	SDA	M	SD
1.	My family's thoughts strongly impact my career decisions.	*f* %	127 57.7	50 22.7	21 9.5	10 4.5	12 5.5	4.23	1.14
2.	I consider my parents' expectations when deciding on a career.	*f* %	137 62.3	54 24.5	17 7.7	7 3.2	5 2.3	4.41	.93
3.	My family's economic situation affects my career choice.	*f* %	80 36.4	53 24.1	40 18.2	16 7.3	31 14.1	3.61	1.40
4.	Family members (other than parents) influenced your career choice	*f* %	80 36.4	48 21.8	34 15.5	20 9.1	38 17.3	3.51	1.49

5.	Family type (Extended/Nuclear) influenced your career choice	*f* %	84 38.2	57 25.9	38 17.3	13 5.9	28 12.7	3.70	1.36
	Total							3.89	1.26

Table 10 shows the frequency, percentage, mean value, and standard deviation of statements related to the participants' perception regarding family influence. The highest mean score was 4.41 for statement No. 2, for which 24.5 percent of participants agreed that they consider my parents' expectations when deciding on a career, with SD=.93. Furthermore, 22.7 percent of participants agreed that their family's thoughts strongly impact their career decisions (M=4.23 and SD=1.14). 25.9 percent of participants agreed that family type (extended/nuclear) influenced their career choice (M = 3.70 and SD=1.36). 24.1 percent of participants agreed that their family's economic situation affects their career choice (M = 3.61 and SD=1.40). 21.8 percent of participants agreed that their family members (other than parents) influenced their career choice (M = 3.51 and SD=1.49). An average score of 3.89 revealed that family influence shaped participants' views, choices, and actions in a favorable way. For some individuals, familial influence might not be the most important factor shaping their views and choices. A higher standard deviation indicates more variation in perception, which suggests different personal experiences and degrees of involvement.

Table No. 11

Participants' Perception Regarding Peer and Social Influence

	Statements		**SA**	**A**	**N**	**DA**	**SDA**	**M**	**SD**
1	My friends' career choices influence my career decision.	*f* %	71 32.3	64 29.1	33 14.5	10 4.5	43 19.5	3.50	1.47
2	I am influenced by what others in my social circle (teachers, mentors) think about my career choices.	*f* %	84 38.2	61 27.7	38 17.3	15 6.8	22 10.0	3.77	1.30
3	Social media and the internet have determined my career choices.	*f* %	96 43.6	55 25.0	35 15.9	14 6.4	20 9.1	3.88	1.29
4	Social status and reputation affected your career choices	*f* %	80 36.4	81 36.8	29 13.2	12 5.5	18 8.2	3.88	1.20
5	Societal needs and demands influenced your career choice	*f* %	89 40.5	79 35.9	31 14.1	8 3.6	13 5.9	4.01	1.11
	Total							**3.81**	**1.27**

Table 11 shows the frequency, percentage, mean value, and standard deviation of statements related to the participants' perception regarding peer and social influence. The highest mean score was 4.01 for statement No. 5, for which 35.9 percent of participants agreed that societal needs and demands influenced their career choice, with SD=1.11. Furthermore, 36.8 percent of participants agreed that social status and reputation affected their career choice (M=3.88 and SD=1.20). 25.0 percent of participants agreed that social media and the internet have determined my career choices (M = 3.88 and SD=1.29). 27.7 percent of participants agreed that they are influenced by what others in my social circle (teachers, mentors) think about my career choices (M = 3.77 and SD = 1.30). 29.1 percent of participants agreed that friends' career choices influence their career decision (M = 3.50 and SD=1.47). An average score of 3.81 revealed that peer and social influence shaped participants' views, choices, and actions favorably. For some individuals, familial influence might not be the most important factor shaping their views and choices. A higher standard deviation of 1.27 indicates more variation in perception, which suggests different personal experiences and degrees of involvement.

Table No. 12

Participants' Perception Regarding Educational Influence

	Statements		**SA**	**A**	**N**	**DA**	**SDA**	**M**	**SD**
1	My teachers and school counselors have provided guidance in making career decisions.	*f*	108	74	17	7	14	4.15	1.12
		%	49.1	33.6	7.7	3.2	6.4		
2	The subjects I perform best in school influence my career path.	*f*	119	61	24	8	8	4.25	1.03
		%	54.1	27.7	10.9	3.6	3.6		
3	Career counseling sessions have helped guide my decision-making.	*f*	107	62	33	7	11	4.12	1.10
		%	48.6	28.2	15.0	3.2	5.0		
4	The subjects offered at school have a significant impact on my career choice.	*f*	104	68	30	13	5	4.15	1.01
		%	47.3	30.9	13.6	5.9	2.3		
5	Your friends motivate you to perform better in your studies	*f*	110	58	29	10	13	4.10	1.16
		%	50.0	26.4	13.2	4.5	5.9		
	Total							**4.15**	**1.08**

Table 12 shows the frequency, percentage, mean value, and standard deviation of statements related to the participants' perception regarding educational influence. The highest mean score was 4.25 for statement No. 2, for which 27.7 percent of participants agreed that the subjects in which participants perform best in school influence my career path, with SD=1.03. Furthermore, 30.9 percent of participants agreed that the subjects offered at school have a significant impact on my career choice (M=4.15 and SD=1.01). 33.6 percent of participants agreed that my teachers and school counsellors have provided guidance in making career decisions (M = 4.15 and SD=1.12). 28.2 percent of participants agreed that career counselling sessions have helped guide their decision-making (M = 4.12 and SD=1.10). 26.4 percent of participants

agreed that your friends motivate you to perform better in your studies (M = 4.10 and SD=1.16). Participants agreed with statements regarding their educational influence with a mean score of 4.15, indicating confidence in their abilities and genuine enthusiasm for the topic. However, the standard deviation of 1.08 suggests that respondents' perceptions varied due to background, experience, exposure, or confidence.

Table No. 13

Participants' Perception Regarding Personal Values and Goals

	Statements		**SA**	**A**	**N**	**DA**	**SDA**	**M**	**SD**
1	I want a career that aligns with my values (e.g., helping others, creativity, etc.).	*f*	129	61	22	3	5	4.39	.89
		%	58.6	27.7	10.0	1.4	2.3		
2	I chose a career that allows me to maintain a balance between personal life and work.	*f*	138	56	18	5	3	4.46	.85
		%	62.7	25.5	8.2	2.3	1.4		
3	Achieving a high level of success in my career is important to me.	*f*	135	64	16	4	1	4.49	.75
		%	61.4	29.1	7.3	1.8	0.5		
4	My aim is to continue learning new skills and knowledge beyond school.	*f*	137	61	18	3	1	4.50	.74
		%	62.3	27.7	8.2	1.4	0.5		
5	I actively seek opportunities for personal and academic growth.	*f*	137	50	26	3	4	4.42	.89
		%	62.3	22.7	11.8	1.4	1.8		
	Total							**4.45**	**0.82**

Table 13 shows the frequency, percentage, mean value, and standard deviation of statements related to the participants' perception regarding personal values and goals. The highest mean score was 4.50 for statement No. 2, for which 27.7 percent of participants agreed that to continue learning new skills and knowledge beyond school, with SD=.74.

Furthermore, 29.1 percent of participants agreed that achieving a high level of success in my career is important to me (M=4.49 and SD=.75). 25.5 percent of participants agreed that I choose a career that allows me to maintain a balance between personal life and work (M = 4.46 and SD=.85). 22.7 percent of participants agreed that I actively seek opportunities for personal and academic growth (M = 4.42 and SD=.89).

27.7 percent of participants agreed that I want a career that aligns with my values (e.g., helping others, creativity, etc.) (M = 4.39 and SD=.89). Participants agreed with statements regarding their values and goals with a mean score of 4.45, indicating confidence in their abilities and genuine enthusiasm for the topic. However, the standard deviation of 0.82 suggests that respondents' perceptions varied due to background, experience, exposure, or confidence.

Table No. 14

Gender-Based Comparison of Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making Among College Students

Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig
Personal Interest and Aptitude	Male	115	20.97	2.72	218	1.864	.064
	Female	105	20.21	3.29			
Family Influence	Male	115	20.19	3.39	218	3.063	002
	Female	105	18.69	3.40			
Peer and Social Influence	Male	115	20.64	3.13	218	6.702	.000
	Female	105	17.29	4.26			
Educational Influence	Male	115	21.26	2.86	218	2.364	.019
	Female	105	20.26	3.43			
Personal Values and Goals	Male	115	22.19	2.16	218	-.501	.617
	Female	105	22.34	2.33			

Table 14 illustrates a comparison of male and female participants' perceptions regarding personal interest and aptitude and shows that male participants (N = 115) achieved an M = 20.97 and SD = 2.72, whereas female participants (N = 105) recorded an M = 20.21 and SD = 3.29. Male participants showed slightly more personal interest and ability on average, although this may be due to chance and does not prove a gender-based difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the male and female groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in personal interest and aptitude between males and females, t (218) = 1.864, p = .064.

Furthermore, a comparison of male and female participants' perceptions regarding family influence shows that male participants (N = 115) achieved an M = 20.19 and SD = 3.39, whereas female participants (N = 105) recorded an M = 18.69 and SD = 3.40. Male participants showed slightly more for family influence on average, although this may be due to chance and does not prove a gender-based difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the male and female groups. The findings revealed a significant difference in family influence between males and females, t(218) = 3.063, p = .002.

Similarly, a comparison of male and female participants' perceptions regarding peer and social influence shows that male participants (N = 115) achieved an M = 20.64 and SD = 3.13, whereas female participants (N = 105) recorded an M = 17.29 and SD = 4.26. Male participants showed slightly more for peer and social influence on average, although this may be due to chance and does not prove a gender-based difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the male and female groups. The findings revealed a significant difference in peer and social influence between males and females, t (218) = 6.702, p = .000.

Similarly, a comparison of male and female participants' perceptions regarding educational influence shows that male participants (N = 115) achieved an M = 21.26 and SD = 2.86, whereas female participants (N = 105) recorded an M = 20.26 and SD = 3.43. Male participants showed slightly more educational influence on average, although this variation may be due to chance and does not prove a gender-based difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the male and female groups. The findings revealed a significant difference in educational influence between males and females, t (218) = 2.364, p = .019.

Finally, a comparison of male and female participants' perceptions regarding personal values and goals shows that male participants (N = 115) achieved an M = 22.19 and SD = 2.16, whereas female participants (N = 105) recorded an M = 22.34 and SD = 2.33. Male participants showed slightly lower personal values and goals on average, although this variation may be due to chance and does not prove a gender-based difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the male and female groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in personal values and goals between males and females, t (218) = -.501, p = .617.

Table No. 15

Grade-Based Comparison of Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making Among College Students

Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig
Personal Interest and Aptitude	11th	80	20.61	3.30	218	.029	.977
	12th	140	20.60	2.86			
Family Influence	11th	80	18.78	3.86	218	-2.125	.035
	12th	140	19.87	3.57			
Peer and Social Influence	11th	80	18.69	4.02	218	-.974	.331
	12th	140	19.24	4.09			
Educational Influence	11th	80	20.14	3.22	218	-2.295	.023
	12th	140	21.15	3.10			
Personal Values and Goals	11th	80	22.05	2.50	218	-1.072	.285
	12th	140	22.39	2.07			

Table 15 illustrates a comparison of 11th and 12th grade participants' perceptions regarding personal interest and aptitude and shows that 11th grade participants (N = 80) achieved an M = 20.61 and SD = 3.30, whereas 12th grade participants (N = 140) recorded an M = 20.60 and SD = 2.86. 11th-grade participants showed slightly more personal interest and ability on average, although this improvement may be due to chance and does not prove a grade-based difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the 11th and 12th grade groups. The results showed no significant difference in personal interest and aptitude between 11th and 12th grades students, with t (218) =.029 and p =.977.

Furthermore, a comparison of 11th and 12th grade participants' perceptions regarding family influence shows that 11th grade participants (N = 80) achieved an M = 18.78 and SD = 3.86, whereas 12th grade participants (N = 140) recorded an M = 19.87 and SD = 3.57. 11th-grade participants showed slightly low family influence on average, although this improvement may be due to chance and does not prove a grade-based difference. An independent samples t-test was performed to determine whether this difference was statistically significant between the 11th and 12th grade groups. The findings revealed a significant difference in family influence between 11th and 12th grade, t (218) = -2.125, p = .035.

Similarly, a comparison of 11th and 12th grade participants' perceptions regarding peer and social influence shows that 11th grade participants (N = 80) achieved an M = 18.69 and SD = 4.02, whereas 12th grade participants (N = 140) recorded an M = 19.24 and SD = 4.09. 12th-grade participants showed slightly higher peer and social influence on average, although this improvement may be due to chance and does not prove a grade-based difference. An independent samples t-test was performed to determine whether this difference was statistically significant between the 11th and 12th grade groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in peer and social influence between 11th and 12th grade, t(218) = -.974, p = .331.

Similarly, a comparison of 11th and 12th grade participants' perceptions regarding educational influence shows that 11th grade participants (N = 80) achieved an M = 20.14 and SD = 3.22, whereas 12th grade participants (N = 140) recorded an M = 21.15 and SD = 3.10. 11th-grade participants showed slightly lower educational influence on average, although this improvement may be due to chance and does not prove a grade-based difference. An independent samples t-test was performed to determine whether this difference was statistically significant between the 11th and 12th grade groups. The findings revealed a significant difference in educational influence between 11th and 12th grade, t(218) = -2.295, p = .023.

Finally, a comparison of 11th and 12th grade participants' perceptions regarding personal values and goals shows that 11th grade participants (N = 80) achieved an M = 22.05 and SD = 2.50, whereas 12th grade participants (N = 140) recorded an M = 22.39 and SD = 2.07. 11th-grade participants showed slightly lower personal values and goals on average, although this improvement may be due to chance and does not prove a grade-based difference. An independent samples t-test was performed to determine whether this difference was statistically significant between the 11th and 12th grade groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in personal values and goals between 11th and 12th grade, t (218) = -1.072, p = .285.

Table No. 16

Location-Based Comparison of Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making Among College Students

Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig
Personal Interest and Aptitude	Urban	116	20.59	3.05	218	-.050	.960
	Rural	104	20.62	3.00			
Family Influence	Urban	116	19.30	3.78	218	-.721	.472
	Rural	104	19.66	3.64			
Peer and Social Influence	Urban	116	18.69	4.30	218	-1.355	.177

	Rural	104	19.43	3.77			
Educational Influence	Urban	116	20.97	3.10	218	.905	.366
	Rural	104	20.58	3.27			
Personal Values and Goals	Urban	116	22.48	2.22	218	1.540	.125
	Rural	104	22.01	2.23			

Table 16 compares how urban and rural residents feel about their interests and skills. Urban residents (N = 116) had an average score of 20.59 with a standard deviation of 3.05, while rural residents (N = 104) had an average score of 20.62 with a standard deviation of 3.00. Urban residents showed a slightly lower average in personal interest and ability, but this difference might just be random and doesn't necessarily mean that where they live makes a difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the location-based groups. The results showed no significant difference in personal interest and aptitude between urban and rural, with t (218) = -.050 and p = .960.

Furthermore, a comparison was conducted between the perceptions of family influence among urban and rural residents. Urban residents (N = 116) had an average score of 19.30 with a standard deviation of 3.78, while rural residents (N = 104) had an average score of 19.66 with a standard deviation of 3.64. Urban residents showed a slightly lower average in family influence, but this difference might just be random and doesn't necessarily mean that where they live makes a difference. An independent samples t-test was performed to determine the statistical significance of this difference between the location-based groups. The findings revealed a no significant difference in family influence between urban and rural, t(218) = -.721, p = .472.

Similarly, a comparison was conducted between the perceptions of peer and social influence among urban and rural residents. Urban residents (N = 116) had an average score of 18.69 with a standard deviation of 4.30, while rural residents (N = 104) had an average score of 19.43 with a standard deviation of 3.77. Urban residents showed a slightly lower average in peer and social influence, but this difference might just be random and doesn't necessarily mean that where they live makes a difference. An independent samples t-test was performed to determine the statistical significance of this difference between the location-based groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in peer and social influence between urban and rural, t(218) = -1.355, p = .177.

Similarly, a comparison was conducted between the perceptions of educational influence among urban and rural residents. Urban residents (N = 116) had an average score of 20.97 with a standard deviation of 3.10, while rural residents (N = 104) had an average score of 20.58 with a standard deviation of 3.27. Urban residents showed a slightly higher average in educational influence, but this difference might just be random and doesn't necessarily mean that where they live makes a difference. An independent samples t-test was performed to determine the statistical significance of this difference between the location-based groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in educational influence between urban and rural, t(218) = .905, p = .366.

Finally, a comparison was conducted between the perceptions of personal values and goals among urban and rural residents. Urban residents (N = 116) had an average score of 22.48 with a standard deviation of 2.22, while rural residents (N = 104) had an average score of 20.01 with a standard deviation of 2.23. Urban residents showed a slightly higher average in personal values and goals, but this difference might just be

random and doesn't necessarily mean that where they live makes a difference. An independent samples t-test was performed to determine the statistical significance of this difference between the location-based groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in personal values and goals between urban and rural, t (218) = 1.540, p = .125.

Table No. 17

Field of Study-Based Comparison of Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making Among College Students

Factor	Category	N	Mean	SD	df	T	Sig
Personal Interest and Aptitude	Science	201	20.60	3.02	218	-.120	.905
	Arts	19	20.68	3.07			
Family Influence	Science	201	19.67	3.64	218	2.553	.011
	Arts	19	17.42	3.97			
Peer and Social Influence	Science	201	19.07	4.08	218	.399	.690
	Arts	19	18.68	4.04			
Educational Influence	Science	201	20.91	3.08	218	1.888	.060
	Arts	19	19.47	3.89			
Personal Values and Goals	Science	201	22.24	2.24	218	-.428	.669
	Arts	19	22.47	2.20			

Table 17 compares how science and arts (field of study) participants feel about their interests and skills. Science participants (N = 201) had an average score of 20.60 with a standard deviation of 3.02, while Arts participants (N = 19) had an average score of 20.68 with a standard deviation of 3.07. Arts participants showed a slightly higher average in personal interest and ability, but this difference might just be random and doesn't necessarily mean that what they studied makes a difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the field of study-based groups. The results showed no significant difference in personal interest and aptitude between fields of study (science and arts)**,** with t (218) = -.120 and p = .905.

Furthermore, the table compares how science and arts (field of study) participants feel about their family influence. Science participants (N = 201) had an average score of 19.67 with a standard deviation of 3.64, while Arts participants (N = 19) had an average score of 17.42 with a standard deviation of 3.97. Science participants showed a slightly higher average in family influence, but this difference might just be random and doesn't necessarily mean that what they studied makes a difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the field of study-based groups. The findings revealed a significant difference in family influence between fields of study (science and arts), t(218) = 2.553, p = .011.

Similarly, the table compares how science and arts (field of study) participants feel about their peer and social influence. Science participants (N = 201) had an average score of 19.07 with a standard deviation of 4.08, while Arts participants (N = 19) had an average score of 18.68. with a standard deviation of 4.04. Science participants showed a slightly higher average in peer and social influence, but this difference might just be random and doesn't necessarily mean that what they studied makes a difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the field of study-based groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in peer and social influence between fields of study (science and arts), t(218) = .399, p = .690.

Similarly, the table compares how science and arts (field of study) participants feel about their educational influence. Science participants (N = 201) had an average score of 20.91 with a standard deviation of 3.08, while Arts participants (N = 19) had an average score of 19.47 with a standard deviation of 3.89. Science participants showed a slightly higher average in educational influence, but this difference might just be random and doesn't necessarily mean that what they studied makes a difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the field of study-based groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in educational influence between fields of study (science and arts), t(218) = 1.888, p = .060.

Finally, the table compares how science and arts (field of study) participants feel about their values and goals. Science participants (N = 201) had an average score of 22.24 with a standard deviation of 2.24, while Arts participants (N = 19) had an average score of 22.47 with a standard deviation of 2.20. Arts participants showed a slightly higher average in personal values and goals, but this difference might just be random and doesn't necessarily mean that what they studied makes a difference. It was necessary to conduct an independent sample t-test to determine the statistical significance of the difference between the field of study-based groups. The findings revealed no significant difference in personal values and goals between fields of study (science and arts), t(218) = -.428, p = .669.

Table No. 18

Age-Based Comparison of Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making Among College Students

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal Interest and Aptitude	Between Groups	38.739	2	19.370	2.145	.120
	Within Groups	1959.856	217	9.032		
	Total	1998.595	219			
Family Influence	Between Groups	61.228	2	30.614	2.249	.108
	Within Groups	2953.609	217	13.611		
	Total	3014.836	219			
Peer and Social Influence	Between Groups	72.310	2	36.155	2.210	.112
	Within Groups	3550.321	217	16.361		

	Total	3622.632	219			
Educational Influence	Between Groups	22.265	2	11.133	1.103	.334
	Within Groups	2189.262	217	10.089		
	Total	2211.527	219			
Personal Values and Goals	Between Groups	7.590	2	3.795	.757	.470
	Within Groups	1087.120	217	5.010		
	Total	1094.709	219			

Table 18 presents the results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for personal interest and aptitude across age-based groups. The between-group sum of squares was 38.739, with 2 df, yielding a mean square of 19.370. The mean square of 1959.856 was calculated by dividing by the df of 217, yielding a mean square of 9.032. The results revealed no significant variations in personal interest and aptitude experiences among age-based groups (F (2,217) = 2.145, p = .120).
The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results showed that when looking at family impact across different age groups, the total variation between the groups was 61.228, with 2 df, leading to a mean square of 30.614. The mean square of 2953.609 was determined by dividing by the df of 217, resulting in a mean square of 13.611. The results revealed no significant differences in family impact experiences among age groups (F (2,217) = 2.249, p = .108).
The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for peer and social impact among different age groups showed that the total difference between groups was 72.310, using 2 degrees of freedom, which gave a mean square of 36.155. The mean square of 3550.321 was determined by dividing by the df of 217, resulting in a mean square of 16.361. The results revealed no significant variations in peer and social influence experiences among age groups (F (2,217) = 2.210, p = .112).
The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results on how education affects different age groups show a total variation between groups of 22.265, with 2 df, leading to a mean square of 11.133. The mean square of 2189.262 was computed by dividing by the df of 217, resulting in a mean square of 10.089. The results revealed no significant differences in educational influence experiences among age groups (F (2,217)=1.103, p=.334).
The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for personal values and goals across different age groups showed a total variation between groups of 7.590, with 2 df, leading to a mean square of 3.795. The mean square of 1087.120 was determined by dividing by the df of 217, resulting in a mean square of 5.010. The results revealed no significant disparities in personal values and goal encounters between age-based groups (F(2, 217) = .757, p = .470).

Table No. 19

Paternal Education -Based Comparison of Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making Among College Students

		Sum of Squares	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
	Between Groups	43.355	3	14.452	1.597	.191

Personal Interest and Aptitude	Within Groups	1955.240	216	9.052		
	Total	1998.595	219			
Family Influence	Between Groups	84.727	3	28.242	2.082	.104
	Within Groups	2930.110	216	13.565		
	Total	3014.836	219			
Peer and Social Influence	Between Groups	5.375	3	1.792	.107	.956
	Within Groups	3617.257	216	16.747		
	Total	3622.632	219			
Educational Influence	Between Groups	11.101	3	3.700	.363	.780
	Within Groups	2200.426	216	10.187		
	Total	2211.527	219			
Personal Values and Goals	Between Groups	5.799	3	1.933	.383	.765
	Within Groups	1088.910	216	5.041		
	Total	1094.709	219			

The results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for personal interest and aptitude across groups categorized by paternal education are presented in Table 4.19 The between-group sum of squares was 43.355, with 3 df, resulting in a mean square of 14.452. The mean square of 1955.240 was derived by dividing by the df of 216, resulting in a mean square of 9.052. The results revealed no significant variations in personal interest and aptitude experiences among groups categorized by paternal education ($F(3, 216) = 1.597$, $p = .191$).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results show that when looking at family influence based on paternal education, the total variation between groups is 84.727, with 3 df, leading to a mean square of 28.242. By dividing the mean square of 2930.110 by the df of 216, we arrived at a mean square of 13.565. The results revealed no significant variations in family impact experiences across groups categorized by paternal education ($F(3, 216) = 2.082$, $p = .104$).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for peer and social impact among groups based on paternal education showed that the total difference between groups was 5.375, with 3 degrees of freedom, which resulted in a mean square of 1.792. By dividing the mean square of 3617.257 by the df of 216, we arrived at a mean square of 16.747. The results revealed no significant differences in peer and social influence experiences among groups categorized by paternal education ($F(3, 216) = .107$, $p = .956$).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed that when looking at the educational impact among groups based on paternal education, the total variation between the groups was 11.101, with 3 df, leading to a mean square of 3.700. By dividing the mean square of 2200.426 by the df of 216, we arrived at a mean

square of 10.187. The results revealed no significant variations in educational influence experiences across groups categorized by paternal education (F(3, 216) = .363, p = .780).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for personal values and goals among groups based on paternal education show a between-group sum of squares of 5.799, with 3 df, leading to a mean square of 1.933 determined by dividing by the df of 216, resulting in a mean square of 5.041. The results revealed no significant variations in personal values and goal contacts across groups categorized by paternal education (F (3, 216) = .383, p = .765).

Table No. 20

Maternal Education -Based Comparison of Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making Among College Students

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personal Interest and Aptitude	Between Groups	19.659	3	6.553	.715	.544
	Within Groups	1978.937	216	9.162		
	Total	1998.595	219			
Family Influence	Between Groups	9.259	3	3.086	.222	.881
	Within Groups	3005.577	216	13.915		
	Total	3014.836	219			
Peer and Social Influence	Between Groups	19.368	3	6.456	.387	.762
	Within Groups	3603.264	216	16.682		
	Total	3622.632	219			
Educational Influence	Between Groups	9.568	3	3.189	.313	.816
	Within Groups	2201.959	216	10.194		
	Total	2211.527	219			

Personal Values and Goals	Between Groups	13.668	3	4.556	.910	.437
	Within Groups	1081.041	216	5.005		
	Total	1094.709	219			

Table 20 presents the results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for personal interest and aptitude among groups categorized by maternal education. The between-group sum of squares was 19.659, with 3 df, resulting in a mean square of 6.553. The mean square of 1978.937 was determined by dividing by the df of 216, resulting in a mean square of 9.162. The results revealed no significant variations in personal interest and aptitude experiences among groups categorized by maternal education ($F (3, 216) = .715$, $p = .544$).
The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results about family influence among groups based on maternal education show a total variation between the groups of 9.259, with 3 degrees of freedom, which gives a mean square of 3.086. By dividing the mean square of 3005.577 by the df of 216, we arrived at a mean square of 13.915. The results revealed no significant variations in family impact experiences among groups categorized by maternal education ($F(3, 216) = .222$, $p = .881$).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for peer and social impact among groups based on maternal education showed that the total difference between groups was 19.368, with 3 degrees of freedom, which gave a mean square of 6.456. By dividing the mean square of 3603.264 by the df of 216, we arrived at a mean square of 16.682. The results revealed no significant variations in peer and social influence experiences between groups categorized by maternal education ($F(3, 216) = .387$, $p = .762$).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) showed that when looking at the educational impact among groups based on maternal education, the total variation between the groups was 9.568, with 3 df, leading to a mean square of 3.189. The mean square of 2201.959 was determined by dividing by the df of 216, resulting in a mean square of 10.194. The results revealed no significant variations in educational influence experiences across groups categorized by maternal education ($F(3, 216) = .313$, $p = .816$).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for personal values and goals among groups based on maternal education that the total difference between the groups is 13.668, with 3 degrees of freedom, which gives the mean square of 1081.041 by dividing by the df of 216, which yielded a mean square of 5.005, resulting in a mean square of 5.005. The results revealed no significant variations in personal values and goal encounters among groups based on maternal education ($F(3, 216) = .910$, $p = .437$).

Table No. 21

Family Income-Based Comparison of Factors Influencing Career Decision-Making Among College Students

		Sum of Squares	**Df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
	Between Groups	35.094	2	17.547	1.939	.146

Personal Interest and Aptitude	Within Groups	1963.501	217	9.048		
	Total	1998.595	219			
Family Influence	Between Groups	16.314	2	8.157	.590	.555
	Within Groups	2998.523	217	13.818		
	Total	3014.836	219			
Peer and Social Influence	Between Groups	27.896	2	13.948	.842	.432
	Within Groups	3594.736	217	16.566		
	Total	3622.632	219			
Educational Influence	Between Groups	26.753	2	13.376	1.329	.267
	Within Groups	2184.775	217	10.068		
	Total	2211.527	219			
Personal Values and Goals	Between Groups	16.619	2	8.309	1.673	.190
	Within Groups	1078.091	217	4.968		
	Total	1094.709	219			

Table 21 presents the results of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) on personal interest and aptitude across groups categorized by family income. The between-group sum of squares was 35.094, with 2 degrees of freedom, resulting in a mean square of 17.547. By dividing the mean square of 1963.501 by the df of 216, we arrived at a mean square of 9.048. The results revealed no significant variations in personal interest and aptitude experiences among groups categorized by family income ($F(2,217) = 1.939$, $p = .146$).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results showed that when looking at family influence across different income groups, the total variation between the groups was 16.314, with 2 df, leading to a mean square of 8.157. The mean square of 2998.523 was computed by dividing by the df of 217, resulting in a mean square of 13.818. The results revealed no significant disparities in family influence experiences across groups categorized by family income ($F(2, 217) = .590$, $p = .555$).
The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for peer and social impact among groups based on

family income showed a total variation between the groups of 27.896, with 2 df, leading to a mean square of 13.948. The mean square of 3594.736 was determined by dividing by the df of 217, resulting in a mean square of 16.566. The results revealed no significant variations in peer and social influence experiences among groups depending on family wealth ($F(2, 217) = .842$, $p = .432$).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for how education is affected by family income show a total variation between groups of 26.753, with 2 df, leading to a mean square of 13.376. By dividing the mean square of 2184.775 by the df of 216, we arrived at a mean square of 10.068. The results revealed no significant variations in educational influence experiences among groups depending on family wealth ($F (2, 217) = 1.329$, $p = .267$).

The one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) results for personal values and goals among groups based on family income showed that the total difference between groups was 16.619, with 2 degrees of freedom, which gave a mean square of 8.309. The mean square of 1078.091 was determined by dividing by the df of 217, resulting in a mean square of 4.968. The results revealed no significant disparities in personal values and goal encounters among groups categorized by family wealth ($F (2, 217) = 1.673$, $p = .190$).

DISCUSSION

The current research study indicated that students at College levels are highly influenced by their families to choose their careers. This conclusion correlates with the previous studies by Kazi and Akhlaq (2017), who underlined the fact that the inability to match the preferences in a profession with actual abilities is a common issue among many students, who might feel such pressure due to the extreme demands of familial pressure. As it is also reported by Aafia Yasin (2020) within the culture in Pakistan, male family members, in this instance, elder brothers, tend to exercise a lot of control over the careers of their girls, thus creating a male-dominated society.

It was also discovered by the study that peers have a great effect on career decision-making, whereby male students are more vulnerable to peer consultation than female students. This falls in line with Naz et al. (2014), who found that peer-groups support professional aspirations, as well as Ogutu et al. (2017), who revealed that peer attachment tends to be positively linked to enhanced decisiveness of career decisiveness. This peer influence may either be constructive or misguided, depending on the advice that is rendered. These findings align with SCCT's pathway from contextual supports (family, peer, and school support) to career outcomes through cognitive-motivational mechanisms (Lent & Brown, 2013). The significant influence of family and peers observed in this study suggests that CSS operates as a contextual resource that shapes students' confidence and goal clarity in career decision-making (Wang et al., 2026).

These results also resonate with Watson et al. (2010), who have pointed out the fact that early choices, including the choice of subjects, may fix students along a specific career path. Without careful perceptions to be countered with truthful information, social influences can lead students away from careers that are not associated with their interests and abilities.

Institutional factors do not comprise the major issue of the study, but they are still relevant. Just as Nguyen and Brown (2023) and Narayanan et al. (2023) see it, the availability of career counselling programs, mentorship, and exposure experiences can make students more confident and develop their career outlook. The existing evidence implies that, without the presence of such institutional assistance, the influence of family and peers might prevail in the process of decision making.

All in all, the paper will prove that the process of career decision-making by the College students in Pakistan is influenced by a complicated variety of personal and social ambitions and the limitations (or possible

abundance) of institutional guidance. The balance among these influences can determine whether students make informed and self-directed career choices or follow predetermined paths set by others.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

This research supports the strong involvement of social and familial influences in the career choices of the College school students, especially in the Pakistani cultural background. A more in-depth insight can be investigated in the future in terms of differences with respect to regions, genders, and socioeconomic groups. Also, longitudinal research may follow along the changes in career decisions as students' progress through secondary school, to college, and entry into the job market.

These results also underscore a research gap regarding the deficiency in institutional backing, i.e., career counselling and mentoring programs. The effectiveness of various models of guidance and modification should be the area of future research to examine whether they could enhance the skills of students in making career decisions and self-efficacy. Research can also be done on how, through digital tools and AI intelligent career guidance platforms, gaps in the current access to quality counselling, especially in remote or underserved neighborhoods, can be bridged.

Besides, the evident impact of family and peer relationships in the career choices of the students implies that career guidance interventions have to touch those students, not only themselves, but their families and environment. To match the expectations of the school and students, Colleges and counsellor's ought to commission workshops and awareness programs that involve fathers and mothers by organizing activities that bring about equitable alignment of expectations of parents in a given household with those of the student.

Moreover, College's ought to make critical choices, especially through the creation/loss of career counselling services, including the generation of proper information, self-evaluation devices, and mentorship prospects. Individualised sessions, particularly gender-sensitive counselling, may possibly help the female students to find access to a wider variety of career choices that are not necessarily traditional or culturally defined.

Thus, it can be suggested that policymakers and education authorities must incorporate career education early in the school curriculum so that students can make career and subject-wise decisions before they complete College education. Lastly, it is possible to increase access to career information and counselling, possibly in rural or remote locations, using technological options like mobile applications or online platforms.

CONCLUSIONS

In this research study, the family influence has been found to play a very important role in influencing career choices among College students in Pakistan, which is a cultural as well as a societal feature in the country. Although family is one of the most important factors, peers and social factors also play a significant role, especially among male pupils. The results emphasize the need to conduct all-encompassing career counseling that will take into account the family, social, and personal dynamics that will enable students to make viable decisions. The recognition of those factors can help educators and policymakers figure out how to intervene more effectively, supporting students in making successful career decisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

The following recommendations can be made based on the study findings:

1. Family encouragement is a major factor in career selection; therefore, colleges and counselors need to include families, particularly parents and older siblings, during career guidance meetings to align the family's expectations with the potential of the students.

2. Distribute specific counseling on careers at the College level that can increase awareness and spread confidence among students in selecting careers and based on individual students.

3. Taking into account the smaller female involvement and certain girls-specific issues, introduce gender-sensitive mentorship and career advancement programs that will enable female students to consider even more career opportunities.

4. Because peer influences the choice of careers, particularly in male students, design group workshops that encourage positive group support and consciousness of various career options.

5. Arrange workshops and practice sessions at which students can develop their competencies in career decision-making so that they will be more informed and confident in the choice of their careers.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

The following suggestions are made for future research:

- Future studies could focus on understanding the specific barriers and enablers female students face in career decision-making, especially in traditional societies.

- Future researchers will conduct longitudinal research tracking students' career decisions over time to examine how family and peer influences evolve and affect career outcomes.

- More studies investigate the impact of career counseling programs and family engagement initiatives on improving students' decision-making skills and career satisfaction.

- Also, examine the role of school environments, resources, and teacher support in facilitating effective career guidance and decision-making.

- Further studies will be conducted on comparative studies between different regions or cultural groups within Pakistan to identify unique challenges and best practices for career guidance.

REFERENCES

Ahmed, K. A., Sharif, N., & Ahmad, N. (2017). Factors influencing students' career choices: empirical evidence from business students. *Journal of Southeast Asian Research*, *2017*(2017, 1-15.

Bieri Buschor, C., Berweger, S., Keck Frei, A., & Kappler, C. (2014). Majoring in STEM - What accounts for women's career decision-making? A mixed-method study. The Journal of Educational Research, 107(3), 167–176.

Bùi, N. T. (2024). Research On Factors Affecting the Career Choice Decision of High School Students in Thai Nguyen Province. *Journal Pendidikan Teknologi Informasi (JUKANTI)*, *7*(1), 75-87.

Cheung, F. (2024). Career self-efficacy as a mediator between career-specific parental behaviors and school career support on career doubt. *BMC Psychology, 12*(1), 39. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-024-01536-9

Fuller, K., Kvasny, L., Trauth, E. M., & Joshi, K. D. (2015). Understanding Career Choice of African American Men Majoring in Information Technology. In Proceedings of the 2015 ACM SIGMIS Conference on Computers and People Research (pp. 41-48). ACM.

Geçikli, F. (2002). Bireysel Kariyer Planlama ve Geliştirmede İmajın Rolü. İstanbul Üniversitesi İletişim Fakültesi Dergisi, (15), 337-354.

Getange, K. N., & Sagwe, G. (2016). Factors influencing students' career choices in public secondary schools in Manga sub-county, Nyamira County-Kenya. *International Journal of Novel Research in Humanity and Social Sciences*, *3*(1), 1-10.

Hou, Z. J., Bai, R., & Yao, Y. Y. (2010). Development of career social support inventory for Chinese college students (in Chinese) [Daxuesheng shengya shehui zhichi liangbiao de bianzhi]. *Chinese Journal of Clinical Psychology, 4*, 439–442.

Hulleman, C. S., Durik, A. M., Schweigert, S. B., & Harackiewicz, J. M. (2008). Task values, achievement goals, and interest: An integrative analysis. Journal of Educational Psychology, 100(2), 398–416.

Jiang, Z. (2016). Social support and career psychological states an integrative model of person–environment fit. *Journal of Career Assessment (Advance online publication), 25*(2), 219–237. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072715621019

Kazi, A. S., & Akhlaq, A. (2017). Factors affecting students' career choice. *Journal of research and reflections in education, 2*(2), 187-196.

Khalid, M., Yousuf, M. I., & Imran, M. (2024). Factors Influencing The Career Choice Of Students At Secondary School Level In Rawalpindi. *Migration Letters*, *21*(7), 514-528.

Koech et al (2016). Factors Influencing Career Choices Among Undergraduate Students in Public Universities in Kenya : A Case Study of University of Eldoret.

Kvasková, L., Hlado, P., Palíšek, P., Šašinka, V., Hirschi, A., Ježek, S., & Macek, P. (2023). A longitudinal study of relationships between vocational graduates' career adaptability, career decision-making self-efficacy, vocational identity clarity, and life satisfaction. *Journal of Career Assessment, 31*(1), 27–49. https://doi.org/10.1177/10690727221084106

Lam, M., & Santos, A. (2018). The impact of a college career intervention program on career decision self-efficacy, career indecision, and decision-making difficulties. *Journal of Career Assessment, 26*(3), 425–444. https://doi.org/10.1177/1069072717714539

Lent, R. W., & Brown, S. D. (2013). Social cognitive model of career self-management: Toward a unifying view of adaptive career behavior across the lifespan. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 60*(4), 557. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0033446

Lent, R. W., Brown, S. D., & Hackett, G. (1994). Toward a unifying social cognitive theory of career and academic interest, choice, and performance. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 45*(1), 79–122. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.1994.1027

Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (1990). *A theory of goal setting and task performance*. Prentice Hall.

Meddour, H., Abdo, A. A., Majid, A. H., Auf, M. A., & Aman, A. M. (2016). Factors Affecting Career Choice Among Undergraduate Students in Universitas Indonesia. *International Journal of Economic Perspectives*, *10*(4).

Naz, et.al. (2014). Peer and friends and career decision making: a critical analysis. Middle East Journal of Scientific Research, 22(8), 1193-1197.

Nugent, G., Barker, B., Welch, G., Grandgenett, N., Wu, C., & Nelson, C. (2015). A model of factors contributing to STEM learning and career orientation. International Journal of Science Education, 37(7), 1067–1088

Ogutu, J. P. Peter, O., Samwel, N., & Maragia, K. (2017). The effectiveness of peer pressure on students' career decision-making in secondary schools in Kenya. International Journal of Humanities and Social Studies, 3(3), 24-29.

Rainey, K., Dancy, M., Mickelson, R., Stearns, E., & Moller, S. (2018). Race and gender differences in how sense of belonging influences decisions to major in STEM. International Journal of STEM Education, 5(1), 10.

Rainey, K., Dancy, M., Mickelson, R., Stearns, E., & Moller, S. (2019). A descriptive study of race and gender differences in how instructional style and perceived professor care influence decisions to major in STEM. International Journal of STEM Education, 6(1), 1–13.

Stone, J. R., & Wang, Y. (1990). The influence of participation in vocational education on expressed career choice in a related occupation. Journal of Vocational Research, 15(1), 41-54.

Taylor, K. M., & Betz, N. E. (1983). Applications of self-efficacy theory to the understanding and treatment of career indecision. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 22*(1), 63–81. https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(83)90006-4

Wang, D., Liu, B., Jiang, Y. *et al.* The impact of career social support on employability of university students from low-income families in China: The chain mediating roles of career decision-making self-efficacy and career goals. *Curr Psychol* **45**, 300 (2026). https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-025-08913-6

Watson, M., McMahon, M., Foxcroft, C., & Els, C. (2010). Occupational aspirations of low socio-economic African children. Journal of Career Development, 37(4), 17-34.

Yasin, A. (2020). What is the role of culture and family influence on the career decisions of Asian tertiary students? *Open Thesis and Dissertations*.

Yayla, H.E. ve Cengiz, E. (2005), "Muhasebe Mesleğinin Tercih Edilmesinde Etkili Olan Faktörlerin Belirlenmesine Yönelik Bir Alan Çalışması: Karadeniz Teknik Üniversitesi Örneği", Muhasebe ve Denetime Bakış, Eylül, pp. 147-168.

Zakahar, N. H. M., Ahmad, N., & Ismail, F. (2024). Factors Influencing Career Choices Among Final Year Students in Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia. *Research in Management of Technology and Business*, *5*(2), 360-369.