Elucidating Higher Education Student's Career Choice Decision in China

Kexin, B[1] & Zainudin, Z.[2]

[1,2]Faculty of Education and Liberal Studies, City University MALAYSIA

*Corresponding Author: dr.zaheril@city.edu.my

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Abstract: Career choice decisions in higher education institutions remain affected by a variation of consideration and circumstances. As a result, students frequently traverse across a composite back-and-forth of intrinsic as well as extrinsic dynamics on career trails. Furthermore, access to career guiding, mentorship, and experiential learning opportunities, such as internships and co-ops, plays a crucial role in shaping career pathways. Technological advancements and the evolving nature of work linger, triggering students to consider careers in emerging fields, often leading to more interdisciplinary choices. Eventually, the purpose of this article is to expand the ongoing discussions regarding the issue of career choice decisions; theories related to career choice decision; factors influencing career choice decision; besides challenges in career choice decision. Furthermore, this article aims to expand on the suggestion in career choice decisions as well as recommendations for future research. The conclusion drawn from this article is that a career is more than just a job – it is a long-term pursuit that can provide personal fulfilment, financial stability, and a sense of purpose. Therefore, higher education institutions need to provide comprehensive support systems to guide students in making informed and sustainable career decisions that align with both personal aspirations and market realities. The importance of choosing a career lies in its ability to provide direction and focus for student goals and aspirations.

Keywords: Higher education, student, career choice decision, China

1. Introduction

Education represents an attempt to help every individual reach the highest possible level. Everyone intentionally maintains education along with establishing this to deliver an atmosphere for learning within the individuals who engage fully in building personal skills associated with spiritual devotion, discipline, personality, intellectual ability, ethics, and competencies required in the social and professional setting. Eventually, education is an essential pursuit for everyone since it will be an essential component of future endeavors.

According to Vygotsky (2020), education is defined as a deliberate and intentional attempt toward developing a learning setting and process in which learners continually grow the abilities over sacred faith, prudence, intellectual curiosity, ethical behavior, as well as abilities required by a community, society, and the nation-state. While Kong and Yuen (2022) define education as the procedure of altering an individual's or collective's beliefs and actions to grow individuals by means of education and instruction.

Further, the accomplishment of education acquired by individuals is one of the keys to the achievement of the nation. Not to mention, numerous aspects remain demonstrated in education to become the establishment of individuals in the future. In this context, education is one of the fundamentals or provisions for the future of individuals. In addition to the learning taught in education, career choice decisions will also be imparted as one of the individual's optimisms for the victory in the future.

A study by Osborn et al. (2023) shows that career choices can be chosen by someone considering personal abilities and desires, together with an exposure to professions in the community. People's challenges in picking and figuring out career paths remain undeniable; many people do not comprehend since careers constitute an essential component of existence to obtain an adequate future. Another study by Hadiyati and Astuti defines career choice decisions as professional versatility, which is described as individual's capacity to confront occupational growth challenges across his or her growing phase. The preceding phase of career advancement influences the forthcoming phase in career choice decisions.

On that basis, higher education institutions constitute the phase of inquiry, during which students ought to concentrate on choosing professions in an even more particular spectrum rather than making a definitive option. For instance, at this stage, most students emphasize careers by choosing courses and institutions. Essentially, students aspire to embark on a successful career based on their ability. Nevertheless, not all students fit into their respective careers. A successful career is aided by efficient career strategy. A prior study found that career planning is an important aspect of preparing for higher education or finding a chosen career (Hadiyati and Astuti, 2023; Kleine et al., 2023; Pham et al., 2024).

Eventually, career choice constitutes one among the factors that influence an individual's career quest. Career choices can be made by individuals depending on their psychological self-perception (Choveaux and Leng, 2024). Career options must be exposed beginning in adulthood, when students require guidance to complete tasks related to growth. In keeping with this perspective, considering the restrictions pointed out, it is critical for students to plan for their prospects when deciding on a career. Undeniably, students at the tertiary level of higher education have attained adulthood. This is a time when students started to consider their upcoming lives since their actions throughout the adult stage get etched in the earliest moments of every person's life after graduation.

Furthermore, past research also has shown that maturity is the stage at which individuals identify and decide which jobs to pursue. For individuals who desire to be satisfied in their job, choosing careers involves an ongoing journey. Career choices selected at the beginning of the higher education stage have a significant impact on future decisions. An adult's professional development continues to require someone to choose between options for improving a career and obtaining profound personal fulfillment (Pham et al., 2024). According to a prior study, career choice involves more than just selecting a profession or career. Career choices include obsession, job, and post occupation throughout an individual's life. A career is a set of roles or primary occupations that an individual holds from adolescents to the golden years (Amarnani et al., 2019; Siddiky and Shahanaz, 2021).

Given the overview, in higher educational institutions, a student's career choice regarding job prospects remains critical, particularly for young people, to ensure subsequent career selection is following the goals intended. This contrasts the findings of preceding prior studies, which showed that most students struggled with planning for careers and opting for them. Students' concerns continue to include a lack of a strategy for their future professions, as well as a lack of knowledge about whether to select a vocation that coincides with their preferences, capabilities, and skills. To advise and help students in making career choices at higher education institutions, understanding elements such as the issue of career choice decision, theories related to career choice decision, factors influencing career choice decision, challenges in career choice decision, and suggestions in career choice decisions is critical in order that students may choose careers in the not-so-distant future.

2. Issue of Career Choice Decision

Nowadays, higher education institution students have been described as the leaders of the country, serving as its labor force and consequently talent. Nations around the globe have started focusing on boosting higher learning, and several empirical studies have discovered how higher education and skilled labor constitute the foundation of inventiveness, which can contribute to improved efficiency and hence boost the economy. Furthermore, the success of a technologically advanced economy is believed to be heavily reliant on the mobility of graduates from universities, as they can be viewed as an asset for creative solutions (Gaol and Wang, 2024; Linge and Kosnin, 2024; Pham et al., 2024).

As a result, this article admitted the importance of understanding the elements that determine such students' career choice decisions. Additionally, previous studies also discovered that a lot of young individuals, particularly students, struggled to make adjustment from higher education institutions to the job market (Yang et al., 2024). Furthermore, some undergraduates continue to pursue courses even though they plainly possess fundamental skills in cognitive and psychological preparation, while there are additionally numerous examples which students have accepted in degrees only to find out they do not have any passion in the subject matter (Jing et al., 2024; Yang et al., 2024). As a result, choosing a career has never been a simple choice nor ought to be taken lightly or disregarded. This becomes particularly prevalent in cases whilst previous investigation has revealed which numerous students lack the ability to indicate career preferences (Shi, 2023; Wang et al., 2023). In this article's viewpoints, this may be linked to higher education students' self-confidence, hence self-efficacy shall be included given a further variable to be reviewed alongside choosing a career.

Furthermore, unemployment and difficulties in obtaining employment for students of higher education institutions continue to be key obstacles, contributing to negative assessments of China's advancement of higher education policies. In fact, according to Statista (Textor, 2004)'s 2023 statistics, 10.47 million students graduated from undergraduate programs from higher education institutions in China. However, most graduates confront a grim job marketplace in China since merely 48 percent of graduates receiving offers and being hired, and this discrepancy between the available pool of graduates towards the need of employment has presented root to various challenges (Shiozaki, 2024). Indeed, numerous companies have claimed that, instead of opportunities for employment, the sources of this challenge seem to be students' performance, their demand for remuneration, which involves higher pay and favorable working conditions, alongside abilities and skills deemed irrelevant for the profession (Wang et al., 2023; Pham et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, in the same vein, job outlook for students reveals that the median graduate rate of job placement following the second half a year of completion has remained largely consistent in China across the span of seven years, topping 90 percent on aggregate. Students who have trouble getting work typically are candidates of considerably fewer technological skills, analytical courses who lack both tangible hard skills along with soft skills including interpersonal skills, analytical abilities, and management qualities (Qingrui, 2024; Shiozaki, 2024). For example, graduates of engineering, computer technology, and science students have higher job rates and starting salaries. In the last ten years alone, the median monthly wage of a Chinese university graduate has risen by over 120 percentage points. However, expensive housing and the cost of living in locations such as Shanghai and Beijing typically push fresh graduates to head back to their hometowns or seek work in the second or third tiered areas (Zuo and Nulimaimaiti, 2024). As a result, it is vital that this article elucidate a review properly considers the Chinese context.

3. Theories Related to Career Choice Decision

Career choice decisions have become a continuous endeavor that begins prior to graduating as well as continuing for an extended period afterward. It additionally involves a process in which students explore an ideal connection or link for joining their desired goals and aspirations to the realities of life. Indeed, negotiating employment opportunities following completion may pose a challenging endeavor to many recent graduates from higher education institutions.

Therefore, it is critical for higher education institutions to embark on the function of a mediator for career choice decisions to reap the benefits from knowing career development theories and gaining substantial knowledge and techniques for making intelligent decisions concerning careers (Leung, 2008). This section examines various popular career development theories and how it relates to student employability. At the same time, it explores John P. Gati's panoramic views on the essential function of academics in higher education institutions in assisting students with choices for careers.

Eventually, the progression of career choice decisions and advancement into a worldwide field necessitates an assortment of theoretical foundations via universal reliability, validity as well as its applications, in addition to culturally specific frameworks which may be utilized to illuminate career choice decision difficulties and phenomena at a student level in higher education institutions. Thus, the focus of this section is mingled on the several prominent theories of career choice decision that have influenced career planning and direction besides support both professionally and academically in recent years within the China and additionally around the globe.

In a nutshell, career choice decision theories offer a robust framework for comprehending and navigating the complexities of the job market. By applying these theories, graduates can make informed decisions, find fulfilling careers, and attain long-term professional success. Future research should explore adapting these theories to address the requirements of the evolving job market. Graduates who align their personality types, interests, and work values with job satisfaction are more likely to remain motivated in their careers (George, 2024).

3.1 Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown and Hackett – 1994)

This theory is intimately connected to Krumboltz' Learning Theory of Career Development and Bandura's triadic reciprocal model of causality. It points out the significance of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals in determining individuals' career choice decisions. Although it is a newfound theory, it tenders three models as building blocks of career growth, which remain (i) development of basic scholastics and career interests, (ii) how people made choices related to education and career, and (iii) accomplishments of academic and career. Such notions possibly will be now recurring to educators in higher education institutions (Lent et al., 1994).

According to SCCT, students may foster confidence in their skills (self-efficacy) and set practical professional goals according to projected results, enhancing job hunting efficiency and total employment fulfillment. Yet, it is critical to possess skilled specialists that might help students in determining the anticipated achievements and achievable employment objectives. In locations featuring a positive commercial perspective, students may leverage current market evaluation and insights to determine with their professional aspirations.

For instance, in locations that have restricted possibilities, students may seek advice from peers and educators on how to pursue other pathways, conceive creatively, and uncover chances in new industries involving gig employment or entrepreneurial. Individuals' career choices can be affected depending on their confidence in themselves, future projections, and individual goals, according to the SCCT. Self-efficacy is a critical factor that influences people's career decisions and preferences.

Also, educators may enable students to comprehend the intricacies of the job marketplace and choose rewarding paths to employment by assisting them in developing trustworthiness regarding their talents and setting realistic objectives. Furthermore, educators may offer direction and help in investigating alternate paths to employment and responding to volatile economic activity environments, guaranteeing students have the competencies and perseverance required to thrive throughout their respective industries.

3.2 Social Learning Theory (SLT) (Krumboltz et al., 1976; Mitchell & Krumboltz 1990 & 1996)

This theory was developed by John Krumboltz in 1976 as an explanation for why individuals make the career choices they make. Individuals choose job selections based on an infinite amount of education opportunities throughout the social setting, which impact their opinions and points of view. Such intentional and unintentional experiences in education, amid the ideas and opinions that it affects and generates, determine the path an individual pursues throughout the plethora of jobs and educational possibilities readily accessible to it (Patton and McMohan, 2006).

Typically, an employment expert employs this approach to help the customer perceive uncertainty and ambiguity as great possibilities. A career development planner serves as an advisor to facilitate additional job planning-focused training. In this context, Krumboltz's social learning theory is divided into two parts: (i) the Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM), and (ii) the Learning Theory of Career Counselling (LTCC).

This theory additionally implies that education circumstances, contextual conditions of use, inheritance, and task-approach abilities all have an impact on career choice. Such factors interplay interactively across an individual's existence, influencing their job path. Educational institutions are good for getting these educational experiences. In educational environments, students have the chance to gain not merely knowledge about academia, but also critical soft skills and practical skills demanded in the job market. By including immersive educational experiences and career exploration tasks throughout the curriculum, educators may help students make educated decisions concerning careers that are aligned with their skills, passions, and objectives.

This method prepares students with the flexibility and perseverance required for successful achievement in a constantly changing employment environment. Educators and career consultants serve a significant part in assisting students throughout the process of career choice decisions including mentoring, encouraging contemplation, and giving concrete support. Educational institutions may assist students acquire optimism regarding their talents and define their professional aspirations by creating a positive educational environment which stimulates inquiry and innovation.

In addition, educators may cooperate with business acquaintances to introduce students to practical applications problems and possibilities, spanning the divide across academic knowledge and actual work. Using the frameworks of the Social Learning Theory of Career Decision Making (SLTCDM) and the Learning Theory of Career Counselling (LTCC), educational institutions may encourage students to be secure in their future professional adventures, exploiting the lessons they have learned toward achievement and satisfaction in the fields of their choice.

3.3 Theory of Work-Adjustment (TWA) (Dawes and Lofquist, 1984)

This theory, frequently referred to as the Person-Environment Correspondence idea, explains a individual's interaction with their job-related setting. TWA originated as the foundation for an investigation initiative in vocational psychology, which is where it is most used nowadays. It revolves on the premise that the closer that an individual's competencies (abilities, expertise, mindset, attitudes, for instance) match the demands of the position or organization, the more probable this becomes that they are going to perform satisfactorily and be deemed to be acceptable by an organization (Dawes and Lofquist, 1984; Dawes, 1994).

Likewise, the closer the reinforcement mechanisms (benefits) of the position or organization align closely with the objectives that an individual's attempts to uphold throughout their employment, the greater the likelihood it will observe the position as fulfilling. In reality, high levels of contentment and satisfactoriness have been suggested to reflect the probability that an individual will remain in an employment position, be productive, and evolve. TWA identifies six fundamental principles that humans aim to comply with (Dawes, 1994):

a. Accomplishment - settings that reassure achievement and advancement.
b. Comfort - settings that reassure absence of pressure.
c. Prestige - settings that provide recognition and prestige
d. Altruism - settings that adoptive coordination and assistance.
e. Safety - settings that institute predictableness and constancy.
f. Autonomy - settings that surge individual domination and inventiveness.

TWA recognizes that the match up among individuals and setting could not have been perfect - perhaps since the individual selected an inaccurate job or the organization recruited an inappropriate prospect. Sometimes excellent correspondence be capable of shifting as time passes. An individual's talents could grow to the point at which they transcend the position they hold, or their top concerns could vary due to idle time duties. The scope of the position and the benefits that an organization might present could additionally alter.

The degree that an individual or their surroundings may embrace a mismatch across skills and demands, as well as standards and incentives, is determined by their flexibility. Individuals', along with surroundings' degrees of flexibility may differ. The degree for flexibility could be influenced by external and internal variables, including temperament or work environment, along with the accessibility of other possibilities. Once the absence of consistency is so severe that flexibility is hardly an option, some sort of correction is frequently made as follows:

a. Active adjustments aim to alter the way individuals work. Individuals might desire to alter the position's substance, and hence its behavioral demands, to more effectively represent their strengths. In addition, individuals may strive to change the jobs incentives by pursuing new benefits, such as improved conditions of employment, a wider range, or higher accountability. The environment's proactive adaptation might entail attempting to alter the individual's talents by means of retraining or changing their opinions or aspirations in a different manner.

b. Reactive adjustment might include an individual attempting to adapt their actions to better correspond with the surroundings or adjusting their own objectives or professional ideals. Furthermore, the workplace could modify the obligations of an employment position in accordance with the individual's inherent abilities or offer incentives to boost their satisfaction with their job.

Last but not least, perseverance can be characterized simply by the degree to that individuals or surroundings attempt to modify prior to abandoning out. Whenever any further adjustments seem practicable, an element of greater consequence occurs when an individual quits their current position or as gets dismissed.

3.4 Theory of Career Choice (TCC) (Holland, 1997)

This theory developed by John Holland based on the foundation of Frank Parsons' theory ponders that individuals and employment situations can be classified as divided into six categories: realistic, investigative, artistic, social, entrepreneurial, and conventional (RIASEC). This model, which might be given via an assortment of inquiries, assists students in identifying choices in careers that will be compatible with their personality and passions, which could contribute to increased job fulfillment and achievement (Holland, 1997; Brown, 2002).

Furthermore, TCC believes that when individuals with similar types of personalities collaborate in the workplace, they establish a work setting that matches and promotes their characteristics. In line with this premise, there are six primary categories of workplace settings as above, that correspond closely to different kinds of personalities. TCC highlights that individuals who decide to seek employment in a workplace that matches their personality traits have been more inclined to succeed and be fulfilled. This concept is significant because it demonstrates how Holland's framework may be adaptable, encompassing several mixture forms.

Ultimately, TCC adopts problem-solving skills and cognitive methods for choosing a career. This framework has proven extremely important in career guidance. It is frequently used in prominent assessments which include the Self-Directed Search, Vocational Preference Inventory, and Strong Interest Inventory. In the end, employing TCC requires evaluating personalities according to the criteria of a couple of distinct types of personalities followed by linking each one with the external characteristics of a possible profession.

3.5 Theory of Circumscription and Compromise (TCICO) (Gottfredson, 1981)

Linda Gottfredson proposed this theory in 1981 to explain how impressionable individual's career choices originate. Several developmental ideas concentrate on the fact that an individual's self-perception evolves throughout maturity. According to TCICO, circumscription is the approach of removing unsuitable vocations across the spectrum of choices for careers, resulting in a "space for permissible choices." Yet compromises believe that people act largely by their passions and goals, it believes that opinions and morals constitute some of the numerous long-term objective's individuals possess (Gottfredson, 1981, Gottfredson, 1996).

Eventually, TCICO concentrates on the fact that young individuals increasingly understand and cope with, or rather fail to contend with, the variety of vocational options available to them in modern society at large. TCICO views that humans form a mental representation of careers by absorbing stereotypes about careers obtained from people surrounding them. It depicts careers based on merely a few dimensions as follows: gender, prestigious stage, and the field of workers. As young people construct this visual representation, they start to figure out which career options remain appropriate, and which remain inappropriate - the ones which align perfectly with their emerging self-perception along with those that do not.

In reality, the fundamental step in the TCICO framework is circumscription, which eliminates inappropriate possibilities depending on their alleged compatibility within an individual's expanding self-perception. The filtrating procedure is rudimentary as well as imprecise throughout its beginning stages, although it proves effective long-term. The recommended circumscription processes involve the following: (i) The orientation process toward size and power (years 3-5), (ii) The orientation process toward sexual roles (ages 6-8), and (iii) The orientation process toward internal, distinctive personality (ages 14 and up).

Next, after circumscription omitted possibilities beyond what is considered social or individual boundary, the subsequent step is compromise. Individuals within that phase might be tempted to forego responsibilities which correspond more closely towards their self-image in preference for ones which appear to be simpler to become available. In this condition, individuals frequently feel restricted by an absence of awareness concerning how to gain accessibility

for career choice decisions due to a deficiency of understanding, skills, and proper strategies, as well as an absence of relevant social networks.

Last but not least, TCICO posits that whenever individuals feel obligated to compromising their career choice decisions, these individuals are far more inclined to compliance primarily upon their chosen area of employment, followed by interpersonal relationships, and finally upon sex-type when the degree of compromise intensifies. This forecast has proven to be extensively disputed, despite a few studies appearing to provide minimal evidence.

3.6 Developmental Self-Concept Theory (DSCT) (Super's, 1950)

This theory developed by Donald Super in the 1950s as an evolutionary framework that stressed the way individual encounters link to career choice decisions to form an individual's self-concept. Indeed, Super's most important achievements to professional progression is the way he focused upon the significance of building a self-concept, along with the understanding of how this self-concept can evolve alongside shifting circumstances over the course of time. This may not appear novel nowadays, but it constitutes a significant departure from how philosophers conceived when Super started to formulate his ideas about theory during the 1950s (Brown, 2002).

In the real world, DSCT underscores that career choice decisions are a continuous endeavor that changes alongside one's self-concept. Self-concept refers to someone's conception of their personal competencies, characteristics, and personalities. The framework divides lifespan into five phases: Development Stage (birth to age 14), Discovery Stage (years 15 to 24), Establishment Stage (ages 25 to 44), Preservation Stage (ages 45 to 64), as well as Deterioration Stage (age 65 and up). The various phases symbolize a particular period of an individual's career choice decisions and are distinguished by certain objectives for growth and challenges.

For instance, the development stage entails building a perception of oneself and a knowledge of the workplace, whereas the discovery phase entails exploring multiple activities and choosing preliminary career choice decisions. Acknowledging such phases allows career advisors and educators to assist students in choosing taught selections that will be consistent with their continuously changing self-concept. Coordinating with one's self-conception is critical since it guarantees that individuals select careers which reflect their true personalities, which leads to increased fulfillment in work, enthusiasm, and fulfillment. Such congruence fosters an understanding of objectives, lowers levels of stress, and improves efficiency and achievement in the workplace.

3.7 Career Construction Theory (Mark Savickas, 2005)

This theory was developed by Mark Savickas in 2005 and build upon individuals the idea of constructivism, social constructionism, and postmodernism. CCT gives an evolving viewpoint for giving individual significance to sentiments, current events, decisions, structuring professional choices based on an appreciation of the concept of meaning, and determining prospects for the future (Savickas, 2013).

CCT aims to describe the interpersonal procedure by which individuals build themselves, determine the path of career choice decisions, and ascribe value to their professional careers, offering a fresh viewpoint on the topic of career guidance. At the same time, CCT explains the interpretative and interpersonal mechanisms individuals use to structure their personality proclivities, enforce orientation upon their vocational conduct, and attempt to make sense of their career advancement.

In the real world, the CCT, based on the scholarship of Donald Super and other theories, consists of the following elements: (i) Vocational Personality, (ii) Career Flexibility, and (iii) Life Theme. CCT concentrates on how people construct their career paths through choosing significant choices and combining their individual histories within a cohesive existence story.

In this context, students might employ storytelling methods to further comprehend their job ambitions and map out a career pathway which reflects their own distinctive narrative. In the present moment, by assisting students in seeing transcend whether their everyday experiences are currently interpreted, they could start to imagine the ways they could establish an entirely novel vocational personality or create an entirely distinct set of desirable abilities. CCT eventually came into existence to help individuals gain greater awareness of themselves.

Ultimately, the CCT framework demonstrates the way educators might assist students learn by creating surroundings conducive to self-reflection and story exploration. Educators may motivate students to inquire about their principles, passions, and actual life experiences through incorporating practices including writing, narratives, and written reflection into the course of study. Educators may additionally promote dialogues that assist students relate their educational experiences towards their individual and professional ambitions, allowing them to clarify their aims and ambitions. Educators may encourage students to create relevant career storylines that reflect their individual skills and goals by means of coaching and support.

3.8   Bridges' Transition Model (BTM) (Bridges, 1991)

This theory was developed by William Bridges in Model echoing Elisabeth Kubler Ross' change curve and to Otto Scharmer's Theory U and Lewin's Change Model as a framework that guides organizations through the process of transition. BTM reveals that individuals transition through personal besides psychological changes over three stages. BTM distinguishes between change and transition since change is situational and external, such as a new job or relocation to a new city. Transition, however, is an internal, psychological process that individuals go through as they adapt to change.

The BTM model indicates the following phases that an individual goes through throughout changes zone: (i) Fresh Start Zone (defined by embrace and vitality towards the forthcoming change), (ii) Neutral Zone (the middle stage in which the previous situation has been eliminated, however the fresh has not yet become totally functioning), as well as (iii) Closing Zone. BTM further underlined the importance of grieving what an individual wishes to let go of prior embracing fresh modes of existence. Insecurity, ignorance, wrath, grief, confusion, irritation, together with ambiguity are all possible feelings in this situation. Educators and career advisors might help students in articulating and processing their thoughts concerning departing their educational setting and joining the job market.

Ultimately, BTM is designed to reflect the stages in which individuals traverse throughout their experiencing changes. Although everyone in the group may proceed though such changes at their own rate, employers may organize the procedure for adjusting to help staff members navigate with emotions throughout each phase of this process. Applying these procedures allows those in leadership positions to capitalize on the BTM to navigate their workplace while encouraging its staff as it undergoes transformations in its structure.

4.   Factor Influencing Career Choice Decision

In recent years, most previous surveys identify today's higher education institution students as well educated, technologically aware, as well as social and family centered. As the career pattern shifts worldwide along with international rivalry intensifies, graduates have grown increasingly competitive in terms of employment or job opportunities, even though the rate of joblessness remains significant. As reported by Hadiyati and Astuti (2023), whenever it involves students' work demands, the most significant importance place on development and training, compensation, and prospects for professional growth.

Furthermore, many students in this generation have switched to work in order to survive mindset, in which students have grown increasingly concerned with paychecks, workplace advantages, and rewards as a result of witnessing parental figures being laid off notwithstanding their outstanding performance in their current positions. Moreover, there currently are numerous aspects that might impact the career choice that someone makes selection.

In this study, the researcher identifies several factors that might impact higher education institution students' career choices decision: family influence (Wu, 2020; Tian et al., 2021; Duan et al., 2022; Xu et al., 2023; Li, 2024), economic concerns (Ai et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2023; Chen, 2024), personal interest (Hui et al., 2020; Goh and Jamaluddin, 2021; Chen et al., 2022; Zhang and Phakdeephirot, 2023; Ng et al., 2024;), self-efficacy (Gu et al., 2020; Ran et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2023; Linge and Kosnin, 2024), and social influence (Boo and Kim, 2020; Lee and Jung, 2022; Shi, 2023; Song et al., 2024).

4.1   Family Influence

Most parents place great emphasis upon their children, wishing for future prosperity and steady employment together with good pay. It has prompted the parents to insist that their children choose an educational program that will take them to a prestigious career. That is precisely why experts have included family as one of the variables that can impact career decision. In this context, family influences children's decisions, especially in fields as important as career selection. Eventually, students see and integrate their extended family's beliefs, jobs, and demands from an early age, which have a substantial impact on their eventual professional prospects.

Furthermore, as major influences, parents frequently have an impact on specific attitudes and objectives in their children. It may direct children intentionally or unintentionally towards jobs that comply with and are consistent with parental customs, demands, or cultural norms. For example, someone who was educated in a family of physicians or engineers might be compelled to opt for a profession in healthcare or engineering since it is perceived as a respectable or secure choice. This effect may either encourage or constrain children's individual passions and inventiveness.

At the same time, a family's financial situation might influence career choice decisions. Families with greater financial stability may encourage their children to explore a variety of career paths, including those in creative industries or art careers, where financial returns may be delayed. Families with less incomes, on the other hand, may encourage their children to seek higher pay or secure employment to ensure that the future is secure.

Later, cultural factors have an impact on decisions regarding careers. Certain career opportunities have particular significance in certain countries, and students might feel compelled to decide on their interests due to cultural and parental standards. Gender distinctions throughout the family might additionally have an important part in certain circumstances, with boys and girls being directed towards career options that have traditionally been appropriate for a particular gender.

While familial influence is significant, it is critical for students to have the freedom to pursue their personal passions and interests. To achieve long-term enjoyment and success in one's field of employment, career decisions should be carefully made with an equilibrium between familial direction as well as individual decisions. Ultimately, families have a tremendous impact on children's job choices, defining their aspirations, values, and possibilities. However, it is also crucial for students to have the choice to seek jobs that are aligned with their own interests and desires.

4.2   Economic Concerns

The economic factors influence a student's career choice decision. In today's competitive and rapidly changing jobs marketplace, students frequently prioritize financial stability while making options for careers, considering the economic rewards and long-term security of various sectors. The rising expenses of education, along with student loan debt, puts pressure on students to pursue occupations with higher earnings possibilities. Professions involving technology, healthcare, and finance tend to be chosen given their high demand and intriguing wages. Students may feel compelled to go into certain disciplines, even if their personal interests lie elsewhere, since economic realities force them to choose financial security.

In addition, the student's family's financial circumstances may have an impact on career choice decisions. Students from low-income backgrounds may have a strong desire to look for positions that provide quick financial benefits to provide for the needs of their families. Students from more affluent households, on the other hand, might be granted greater independence to choose employment opportunities that tend to be in line with their interests, regardless of whether such occupations offered smaller or uncertain income.

The overall economic landscape also influences decisions regarding careers. During an economic downturn or uncertainty, students may avoid fields that are prone to layoffs or instability, instead choosing sectors that are seen to be recession-proof, such as the health sector or government services. Ultimately, economic concerns have an important influence on a student's career choice decision, often prompting them to prefer financial stability and long-term security over individual objectives. While economic realities must be acknowledged, it is critical for students to strike a balance between financial requirements and personal fulfillment in their chosen careers.

4.3   Career Prospect

The availability of professional options is a major factor in a student's career choice. In today's changing work market, students frequently examine the requirements of specific careers, employment prospects, and long-term chances while deciding on a future career. Students are more inclined to pursue occupations that provide exciting prospects for advancement. For example, due to the increasing requirement for skilled individuals, sectors including technology, healthcare, and engineering have become particularly appealing. These industries offer job stability, excellent pay, and opportunities for promotion, making them appeal to students looking for long-term success.

Furthermore, advances in globalization and digitalization have an impact on career prospects. As some industries diminish owing to machine learning, students may choose conventional careers in favor of developing jobs consisting of data science, artificial intelligence, or renewable energy, which offer greater chances in the future. Ultimately, knowledgeable opportunities have a big impact on students' decisions, as they seek discipline with high demand, job security, and professional development prospects. Matching personal interests with practical factors about employment opportunities is critical for making educated career decisions.

4.4   Personal Interest

Personal interest is critical in determining a student's career choice decision since it determines motivation, satisfaction, and long-term achievement. Students who have dedication regarding an area of expertise are generally more likely to devote the time and effort needed to achieve success in it. In this context, selecting a career based on personal interests enables students to align their professional pathways with their interests, abilities, and skills. For example, a student who enjoys writing may be drawn to a career in journalism or creative writing, whereas someone with a strong interest in technology may seek a career in software development or engineering. This connection of passion and career frequently results with greater job satisfaction, as students feel fulfillment in doing what they truly enjoy.

Furthermore, determining a career choice according to individual preferences may contribute to additional commitment as well as a determination to triumph over challenges. Students who are genuinely enthusiastic about their chosen field are generally more inclined to look for even more educational opportunities, maintain updated on the latest developments, as well as perpetually enhance their knowledge and skills.

While practical considerations such as money and career longevity remain crucial, competent choices motivated by personal interests frequently resulted in greater long-term pleasure and success. Students who pursue their passions seem more likely to feel motivated and purposeful in their careers. Ultimately, personal interest is an important aspect in a student's career choice since it generates enthusiasm, dedication, and satisfaction. A career that is compatible with an individual's interests might lead to a more meaningful and successful professional life.

4.5   Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy, or optimism in an individual's capacity to succeed in specific activities, is a critical factor in a student's career choice decisions. Students with strong self-efficacy in specific areas are generally more likely to seek jobs in such sectors due to harbor confidence in the ability to perform well and succeed. In this atmosphere, students who believe in their skills seem more inclined to learn about challenging topics while taking risks. For example, a student who excels in arithmetic and believes in their problem-solving talents may be more confident in pursuing a career in engineering or data analysis. Students with weaker self-efficacy within disciplines, on the other hand, might turn down employment opportunities within those areas simply due to anxiety regarding failing or due to a shortage of competence.

Indeed, self-efficacy can be influenced by a variety of circumstances, including previous academic accomplishment, motivation from educators and family, and experience of role models in specific careers. Positive reinforcement and experience may boost a student's confidence in continuing a career, whereas frequent failures or an inadequate level of support may undermine self-efficacy, causing students to avoid careers. Ultimately, self-efficacy influences a student's career decision by changing the desire to take on challenges and choose careers in which they believe will succeed. Students are more likely to choose and excel in careers that match their capabilities along with their goals if they have a strong belief in themselves.

4.6   Social influence

Social influence is extremely important in determining a student's career choice decision. Students become influenced by different social elements from an early age, such as relatives, peers, educators, and society standards, all of which influence their choices for careers. In this scenario, family is frequently the most powerful social influence. Parents and relatives may have certain expectations or preferences for job paths determined by beliefs, traditions, as well as achievements. In certain circumstances, students feel compelled to find careers that meet family expectations, even if they do not line with their specific areas of interest.

Educators and peers additionally influence career choice decisions. Positive reinforcement from educators in a particular field may encourage students to look for related career opportunities. On the other hand, negative comments or a lack of support may discourage students from choosing areas at which they might be ordinarily enthusiastic. Ultimately, social influences have a substantial impact upon a student's career choice by altering the possibilities depending on the expectations and judgments of relatives, peers, and educators. While external influence is inevitable, students must reconcile it with their personal passions and goals to pursue a fulfilling career.

5.   Factor Influencing Career Choice Decision

A career choice decision is an intricate and ever-changing endeavor that entails analyzing individual's preferences, talents, principles, and objectives regardless of examining many choices, and selecting a route which is compatible with your aspirations. Yet, throughout the journey, someone may face several typical challenges that may undermine trust, inspiration, and contentment. Thus, selecting a career constitutes one of among the most essential decisions a student takes, but it is sometimes plagued with difficulties. The process entails managing multiple uncertainties, external influences, and personal conflicts. One of the most difficult issues is the sheer quantity of career alternatives accessible in today's continuously changing labor market. Subsequently, students might find it challenging to determine whether careers provide stability over time or match their passions (Pang et al., 2021; Chen and Muktar, 2022; Shi, 2023; Guo et al., 2024).

Further, cultural and familial expectations might create pressure, propelling students into careers that do not correspond with their own personal objectives. This can lead to tension and uncertainty as students struggle to balance their passions with external demands. Furthermore, a lack of appropriate direction and self-awareness can impede decision-making. Without a clear understanding of their strengths and interests or proper career information, students might feel lost in the decision-making process. In the end, the challenge of career choice is diverse, requiring students to combine external factors with personal introspection and informed decisions (Kulcar et al., 2020; Tian et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022; Shao, 2023; Xiaoqing and Noordin, 2024). As a result, this article addresses some of the most prevalent career decision-making hurdles along with methods to conquer it.

5.1   Lack of Clarity

Getting clear regarding what people want to do and individual abilities is occasionally difficult, resulting in disorientation, dissatisfaction, and uncertainty. Thinking about taking a career evaluation as well as aptitude assessment to better understand abilities, interests, and matchmaking possibilities. Individuals may additionally conduct informal conversations with people in careers or positions they're interested in to obtain information about their experiences and suggestions. Seeking input from mentors, peers, or superiors about achievements, competencies as well as areas for advancement additionally proves valuable. Ultimately, focusing on your previous accomplishments, interests, and ideals in juxtaposition with present or prospective career might provide clarity.

5.2 Fear of Failure

Fear of committing a rookie error or selecting the incorrect choice is frequent, as it may give rise to tardiness, worry, and insecurity. To triumph over this phobia, an individual must acknowledge that there is indeed no ideal option, yet that individual could alter the path and gain insight into missteps. In addition, define realistic and comprehensive objectives and divide them into achievable sections. Getting assistance from other people, such as educators, peers, family, or professionals, can help an individual stay motivated, offer advice, and cope with stress. Additionally, continue to appreciate every accomplishment and recognize each dedication and development, no matter how relatively small.

5.3 Lack of Resources

A common issue is encountering roadblocks or constraints that prohibit someone from chasing a particular career. Financial constraints, educational gaps, regional barriers, and personal duties are some examples. To solve this difficulty, examine the prerequisites and prospects for the desired career and identify any gaps or hurdles which must be resolved. Furthermore, investigate alternate or flexible choices such as distance learning courses, financial aid, job placements, or remote employment to assist individuals gain the necessary skills, experience, or certifications. In addition, individuals must frequently seek help from organizations of interest such as careers centers, professional associations, or community groups, which may provide guidance, resources, or contacts. Ultimately, evaluate the needs and desires and develop a strategy which corresponds to the professional objectives alongside your personal needs.

5.4 Selections Overload

A selection overload is also common challenge is feeling overwhelmed by the number and variety of options available to someone, which can make it difficult to compare and evaluate it, as well as result in ambiguity or disappointment with career choice decision. People may confront this difficulty through narrowing down all options based on passions, skills, standards, and aspirations. Individuals may additionally evaluate each choice based on its advantages and disadvantages, practicality, and prospective consequences. Individuals may conduct analysis as well as request criticism to better comprehend whether choices suit people's expectations. Ultimately, after an individual has decided, stick to it without second-guessing or comparing oneself to others.

5.5 Lack of Inspiration

Lacking motivation or anticipation in the career decision-making procedure is a typical problem that is frequently attributed to frustration, exhaustion, or dissatisfaction as well as external influences including tension, demands, or diversions. To conquer such obstacles, reminding oneself of an objective and goal, along with how career choice decisions might assist individuals accomplish it. Additionally, create a schedule and timeframe to determine career decisions, evaluate achievements plus accomplishments, and encourage oneself after achieving objectives or accomplishing targets. Draw inspiration on people who have chosen lucrative or significant career choices and gain insight through the events along with guidance. As a whole, professional decisions remain difficult, yet not insurmountable. Understanding and dealing with prevalent problems can boost one's trust, determination, and career fulfillment.

5.6 Lack of Skills

Possessing the appropriate skills in an employment opportunity, including higher education or competencies, is a typical problem which numerous individuals experience throughout the course of their employment. If one does not have the required skills regarding the position that anyone desires, there may be measures one may undertake to achieve it. To discover the qualifications and abilities needed to fulfill the position, look at the position's requirements. Look for courses or credentials that relate to the career. Emphasize this educational experience in the application to demonstrate to organizations the dedication to honing the breadth of individuals abilities.

5.7 Lack of Experience

Several careers demand applicants to possess experience that is appropriate to the position at hand. If someone with no work experience at all, it may appear difficult to demonstrate to organizations that one possesses the appropriate skills for the vacant position. Whenever looking for positions without fewer years of experience than needed, edit the application to highlight transferable qualities such negotiation. Demonstrate the way previous work within a different profession or field matches the present employment. Should the goal be to accumulate expertise while making an application, consider a few extra initiatives upon the side. For instance, someone may develop an online presence to show an individual's skills for an authoring career.

5.8 Transformation in Organization

Transformations in the field or role may possess a detrimental effect upon one's professional ambitions. For instance, when a given sector grows increasingly dependent on technological advances, someone may struggle to develop a career

due to lack of technological skills. Over the course of your employment, it is vital to be adaptable and continuously developing the ability to adjust to shifting circumstances which might arise. Go through texts and articles upon the subject to maintain current on emerging developments. Accept novel opportunities within the organization to grow or strengthen an individual's skills. View transitions as chances to further grow as a professional.

6.   Suggestion in Career Choice Decisions

The career choice decision-making process is ongoing throughout professional life and as career develops, it might come across oneself applying this procedure once more. At certain points, someone might become dissatisfied feeling like they are no longer nearer to figuring out guidance than initially began. While one continues throughout the steps, there's development. Every component that someone looks at brings it nearer to discovering the choices that will work most successfully for themselves.

In fact, choosing a career constitutes one of among the most significant choices individuals will ever make throughout every aspect of our lives. This may profoundly influence our general state of mind, fulfillment, and financial security. Nevertheless, selecting the most suitable career route is occasionally difficult, and several individuals strive to make a choice which seems appropriate for themselves. In the next section, this article investigates different choice-making approaches that might assist students to take educated and assured career choice decisions (Huang and Curle, 2021; Alolga et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2023; Xiaoqing and Noordin, 2024).

6.1   Rising Self-awareness

Discovering one's abilities, limitations, beliefs, along with preferences. This approach involves concentrating upon previous circumstances, achievements, and obstacles in order to determine the skills as well as specific fields of specialization. Being aware of ourselves might additionally involve completing aptitude and personality assessments, that might offer information about the underlying strengths and interests.

6.2   Investigating Prospective Careers

This phenomenon could assist students understand more about the requirements of the position, credentials, and income prospective. This procedure may include communicating with practitioners throughout the area, examining descriptions of careers, and researching marketplace developments as well as expansion estimations.

6.3   Creating Selection Lists

Developing a list of benefits and drawbacks of every prospective career could assist students analyze the advantages and disadvantages associated with every choice. This strategy might prove very useful for people who have disagreements among a couple of professional choices. Prepare a list of pros and cons of items, which include high demand; good income; interesting career; numerous education possibilities high competitiveness; expertise required; lengthy working hours; concerns about ethics; technological barriers.

6.4   Deciding Matrix

A matrix of decisions has become a list which juxtaposes different possibilities for careers with respect to specific requirements. Employment satisfaction, income prospective, societal contributions, employment stability, as well as job and personal life equilibrium among some of the possible criteria. Using this approach will enable students to independently assess both the positive and negative aspects associated with every career choice.

6.5   Informational Discussions

Talk to industry specialists to obtain a deeper grasp of the careers daily tasks, obstacles, as well as benefits. This technique might help students gain an accurate representation of their career while deciding whether it is an appropriate match for them. Informative conversations provide an opportunity to acquire knowledge about other people and expand your circle of acquaintances, so go into it with a sense of curiosity and an authentic curiosity in another individual's experiences.

6.6   Inspecting Sensations

Consider a couple of hours spent demonstrating the manner in which it senses concerning distinct career choices. Are they perceived as enthusiastic, apprehensive, or uninterested? The practice of paying close attention to the sensations as it might offer invaluable perspectives through what career pathways have might be considered attractive to you. Take into account the long-term consequences: Consider how different career choices could impact your future contentment and fulfillment. Demand oneself whenever it might discover yourself becoming pleased and delighted alongside a specific career choice in the long run.

As recommendations for future research, the outcomes of this article offer certain significant insights into the strategy and execution of higher education students' career choice decisions. Higher education institutions and authorities

throughout China ought to concentrate on developing students' professional decision- making optimism, as well as enhancing students' trust as well as abilities to decide on career choices. The following is possible accomplished by means of the availability of career guidance, which every higher educational institution is capable of providing to assist students gain insight into their preferences, standards, and career objectives; for instance, higher educational institutions might additionally offer psychological assistance that will help students navigate the stress and anxiety that can crop up while deciding career choices; and the admissions management division of higher educational institutions may propose students with additional real-world initiatives.

6. Conclusion

Selecting a career is of life's unpredictable greatest crucial actions, influencing rather than merely the career destiny yet ultimately overall personal satisfaction. It necessitates reflection on oneself, studies, and a thorough knowledge of our own abilities, interests, and objectives. An adequately informed decision might contribute to a fulfilling and successful career, whereas a hasty choice might result in disappointment. It's crucial to maintain adaptability, as career pathways frequently vary through experiences and evolving job marketplace. Eventually, the ideal decision matches individual abilities with possibilities for development, permitting anyone to create a substantial contribution whilst attaining emotional along with personal achievement.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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