



Identification of the Learning Choices of Undergraduate Students in District Bahawalpur

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Vol. V, No. IV (Fall 2020)

Pages: 59 – 66

p-ISSN: 2616-955X

e-ISSN: 2663-7030

ISSN-L: 2616-955X



Abstract

Aim of the study was to identify the learning choices of undergraduate students. The key objectives of the study were (a) to examine the Impact of learning choices on academic achievement, (b) to find out the factors that influence the learning choices of undergraduate students. Nature of the study was descriptive, and the survey was used to explore the reasons from the students about their learning choices. Total 240 BS Students from Higher Education Institutions of District Bahawalpur were selected randomly. The questionnaire was the main source of collecting information from undergraduate students. Results of the study identified that majority of the undergraduate students face difficulty in choosing the right learning course while less than half of the students were satisfied with their learning choices.

Key Words: Learning Choices, Academic Achievement, Interest, Socioeconomic Status

Introduction

The learning choices of students have a deep influence on the student's life and on their study career. The right choice about the study will produce a better, stable and comfortable life of students and have a productive effect on his/her family, community and the whole nation. The different factors that contribute in learning choices are teacher's motivation; parents support, guideline by counselors, student's own interest, skills, values, supportive environment, have the impact on students learning choice. The research study provides a comprehensive guideline to improve better learning choices through improving and developing the counseling session in every institute.

Scruggs and Morgan (2008) describe the teacher importance in learning choices as teachers can save the students from spoiling because teachers always remain inspiring personality for students and science teacher play a significant role in shaping the students learning style to enter the STEM (Science, technology, engineering, mathematics) courses, as well as parents and counsellors, are effective in assisting support them in learning choices of subjects as a future career. Another writer Peterson, (2007) describe teachers' role in 21st century is less instructor and more orchestrators of information and develops the ability of decision making, logical thinking, and critical thinking in learner to turn knowledge into the wisdom which helps them to become a lifelong learner and a productive member of the society. For learning choices, different tests self-testing, personality testing, interest inventory testing and aptitude testing help the learner to choose the learning choices that suit their intellectual level and interest. Testing has a good effect on learning and explores the interest and the new ways of learning [Roediger & Karpicke \(2006\)](#).

[Teng, Morgan, & Anderson, 2001](#) were the view of a number of researches identifies that true choice plays a central role in learning of student's life and interest is associate with the students' academic goals. In medical education, research has shown that learning choices of students have strongly associated with their academic achievement. Majority of college student's desire help in career decision and selecting their majors (subject) to

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meet their own needs and the 21's century demand (Peng, 2001). College students need to guide to decide their majors according to their interest, capabilities, values, and skills and remain satisfied comfortable with their decision in choosing colleges and areas of study or majors (Salter, 2008). Parents set a high standard for their children in making learning choices about schools (Butler & Hamnett, 2012).

According to Wang et al., (2006), adolescents tend to have difficulty identifying their career interests. After completing intermediate students who have decided their field of interest develops a very clear sense of their profession and learning choices. They make their career goals and start working toward them. It is the responsibility of the counselor to guide and help an individual to become fully aware of him and the ways in which he is responding to the influences of his community. The counseling session is quite essential for students to help in learning choices as a career development as one of the main goals in their education. Without sufficient counseling session, numerous student losses interest or fed up with what they were doing in the past. A lot of students decide to change their science or non-bioscience field, and they not seen more their future in science and choose a different field of study (Anderson et al 2003).

Socio-economic background of family, environment, close friends and sibling's pressure, other family members, nature of college, and society demands and their expectation and desires are seen as the prime factors that have a strong influence on student learning choices as their future career development. The family have a great influence on their young adults, especially in two major life events like marriage and their career. Those families who support the students with a strong, better-developed self-concept and have confidence over learning choices are more confident about their ability to succeed, while those who have not clear goals for their career are less confident for success Bean and Eaton (2000). Therefore, it is beneficial for the student to have been aware of his strengths and weaknesses about learning when choosing courses, asking for accommodation, when studying describe the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) (Stodden & Conway, 2002).

Learning choices is a critical phase in student's life, selection of correct subjects that have a deep impact on a whole life of learners and offers lifelong learning, economic and social stability. The attitude of our society is such that a majority of parents wish their children to become either doctors or engineers. Students are unsure and confused about which career path and education program will match their academic achievement, personality, skills, interest and values. It is very important to select a career in the field of your interest.

Selecting or choosing a learning course or choice-based learning is considered the most significant aspect of the teaching-learning process. Choice-based learning is a process through which students can select their preferences, interests and benefits and regulate how one can inter-relate the educational content. Literature and previous research studies show that when learners have the ability to select the preferences, they make more optimistic inclinations due to the increased confidence level. The choice of selecting the right subject is one of the basic elements. It has been observed that most of the students, after completing their intermediate school education, are widely confused about their right learning preferences. Majority of students after intermediate schooling, they do not know about the goals of life. They might not have enough information about how to choose subjects which would be beneficial for them in future. There are many other reasons for students to select their preferences in the right way so that they become a valuable citizen of the country in future. This is a time when students need guidance in the selection of their future and subjects. If at this stage, they get proper guidance, they can select suitable subjects. For them, the major sources of guidance are teachers, leaders, administrators, seniors, friends, parents, community, electronic and print media (Jejeeboy, Shireen J., Sathar, Zeba A., 2001).

For learning choices, different tests self-testing, personality testing, interest inventory testing and aptitude testing help the learner to choose the learning choices that suit their intellectual level and interest. Testing has a good effect on learning and explores the interest and the new ways of learning Roediger & Karpicke (2006). Teng, Morgan, & Anderson, 2011 were the view of a number of researches identifies that true choice plays a central role in the learning of student's life and interest is associate with the students' academic goals. College students need to guide to decide their majors according to their interest, capabilities, values, and skills and remain satisfied comfortable with their decision in choosing colleges and areas of study or majors (Salter, 2008).

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influence on student learning choices as their future career development. Those families who support the students with a strong, better-developed self-concept and have confidence over learning choices are more confident about their ability to succeed, while those who have not clear goals for their career are less confident for success (Bean and Eaton, 2000).

Current Research

Learning choices play an important role in a student’s career development. Learning choices enhance decision-making skills and also develop an awareness of interest. Learning choices have strongly influenced student’s education and on their academic scores. The choices mainly depend on teachers and parents’ motivation in the selection of study course. Researcher designs this study “the identification of learning choices of students after higher secondary schools”. Keeping in view, the problem following were the objectives of the study (a) to examine the Impact of learning choices on academic achievement and its effect and (b) to find out the factors that influence on the learning choices of students after higher secondary schools and (3) to recommend suitable strategies for students learning choices at the higher secondary level. To achieve these following research questions were designed:

- What is the Impact of learning choices on academic achievement and its effect and?
- What are the factors that influence the learning choices of students after higher secondary schools?
- What are the suitable strategies for students learning choices at the higher secondary level?

Method

Nature of the study was descriptive while the survey method was used to gather information from the undergraduate students. All the undergraduate students of Higher Education Institutions and degree colleges of district Bahawalpur were the populations of the study. Total 240 undergraduate first-year Pakistani University and College students participated in this study, i.e., Women College Ahmad Pur East, Gov’t Sadiq Women University Bahawalpur, SE College Bahawalpur, Students of NCBA&E and The Islamia University of Bahawalpur. Simple random sampling technique was used to gather information from the target population. In light of the extensive literature review and objectives of the study, the research tool was developed. The questionnaire was used as a tool to identify the opinion and problems of students regarding their learning choices. Total 43 close-ended statement and three open-ended questions were included in this study. The validity of the research instrument was checked by the experts related to education, senior faculty members of the education department and supervisor. After their feedback, few items were deleted, and few items were included. With regard to the reliability of the instrument, the researchers conducted a small-scale pilot study to establish the reliability and face validity of the questionnaire. Therefore, a pilot study was carried out in which a small sample consisting of 40 students belongs to different departments of NCBA&E were selected. Results were calculated with the help of SPSS version 22, and Chronbach Alfa value was found to be 0.827 for the questionnaire of students. The data was collected personally by the researcher from a selected sample of research population from each tehsil while all the research ethics was kept in mind and ensure confidentiality. Collected data were analyzed with the help of statistical software package for social science (SPSS) by using statistical formulas of simple mean, percentage, t-test, ANNOVA and standard deviation.

Results of the Study

Table 1. Gender Wise Analysis of the Factors of Learning Choices of Students

Factors	Gender	N	Mean	S. D	Df	Sig.	MD	S. D
Identify the interest of learning choices of students	Male	120	14.52	2.802	238	.000	-1.400	.350
	Female	120	15.92	2.61				
Reasons involve in making learning choices	Male	120	18.52	2.95	238	.000	-1.267	.348
	Female	120	19.78	2.40				
Impact of learning choices on academic achievement	Male	120	61.35	.7973	238	.005	-2.758	.973
	Female	120	64.11	.072				

Factors	Gender	N	Mean	S. D	Df	Sig.	MD	S. D
Factors that influences on learning choices of students	Male	120	35.47	4.812	238	.000	-2.275	.618
	Female	120	37.74	4.761				

The present table identified the interest of learning choices of students. The major purpose of asking this factor was to know the student's awareness of their learning choices. There had been 240 participants and 120 female students and also 120 male students who took part in the survey. The data taken from the respondents had been analyzed factually to get the results. These results indicated that the mean value attained 14.52 for the male participant and the mean value 15.92 for female participants. The value of standard deviation for male participants is 2.80 had been greater than 0.5 and; it showed up 2.80 for male participants and 2.611 for female participants which are insignificant and seemed to have no impact over the variables. The mean difference value for both genders is -1.40. The significant value is recorded as .000 for factor 1. The value of S.D is .350. Table 1 describe that Reasons involve in making learning choices the major purpose of asking this factor was to know the reasons involve in making learning choices like as guidance and counseling may effective for better learning choices. There had been 240 participants and 120 female students and also 120 male students who took part in the survey. The data taken from the respondents had been analyzed factually to get the results. These results indicated that mean value attained 18.52 for the male participant and the mean value 19.78 for female participants. . The value of standard deviation for both genders had been greater than 0.5 and it showed up for male participants 2.92 and 2.44 for female participants which are insignificant and seemed to have no impact over the variables. The mean difference value for both participants is -1.267 while the significant value is recorded as .000 for factor 2. The value of S.D is .348. Data further describe that Impact of learning choices on academic achievement reasons involve in making learning choices. The major purpose of asking this factor was to Impact of learning choices on academic. There had been 240 participants and 120 female students and also 120 male students who took part in the survey. The data taken from the respondents had been analyzed factually to get the results. These results indicated that that mean value attained 61.35 for the male participant and the mean value 64.11 for female participants. The value of standard deviation for both genders had been greater than 0.5, and it showed up for male participants and for female participants who are insignificant and seemed to have no impact over the variables. The mean difference value for both participants is- 2.75. The significant value is recorded as .005 for factor 3. The value of is S.D value is .973. The major purpose of asking this factor was to know the reasons involve in making learning choices like as counseling and guidance may effective for students to make the decision for better learning. There had been 240 participants and 120 female students and also 120 male students who took part in the survey. The data taken from the respondents had been analyzed factually to get the results. These results indicated that the mean value attained 4.81 for the male participant and the mean value 4.76 for female participants. The value of standard deviation for both genders had been greater than 0.5 and it showed up for male participants and for female participants which are insignificant and seemed to have no impact over the variables. The mean difference value for male participants is -2.27. The significant value is recorded as .000 for factor 4. The value of S.D is .618.

Table 2. Area Wise Analysis of the Factors of Learning Choices of Students

Areas	N	Mean	S. D	Df	Sig.	MD
Rural	120	15.56	2.731	238	.058	.683
Urban	120	14.88	2.821			
Rural	120	19.72	2.309	238	.001	1.133
Urban	120	18.58	3.056			
Rural	120	63.92	7.139	238	.016	2.375
Urban	120	61.54	7.976			
Rural	120	37.56	4.413	238	.002	1.908
Urban	120	35.65	5.208			

Table 2 identifies the interest of learning choices of students. The major purpose of asking this factor was to know the student’s awareness of their learning choices. There had been 240 participants and 120 female students and also 120 male students who took part in the survey. The data taken from the respondents had been analyzed factually to get the results. These results indicated that the mean value attained 15.56 in rural area participant and the mean value 14.88 in urban area participants. The value of standard deviation in rural areas’ participants’ is 2.73 had been greater than 0.5 and in urban area’s participants is 2.82, which is insignificant and seemed to have no impact over the variables. The mean difference value for areas is .683. The significant value is recorded as .058 for factor 1. The present table identified the interest of learning choices of students. The major purpose of asking this factor was to know the student’s awareness of their learning choices. There had been 240 participants and 120 female students and also 120 male students who took part in the survey. The data taken from the respondents had been analyzed factually to get the results. These results indicated that mean value attained 19.72 in rural area’s participant and the mean value for urban participants 18.58. The value of standard deviation in rural area’s participants is 2.30 had been greater than 0.5 and in urban area’s participants is 3.05, which is insignificant and seemed to have no impact over the variables. The mean difference value for both urban and rural is 1.13. The significant value is recorded as .001 for factor 2. The present table identified the interest of learning choices of students. The major purpose of asking this factor was to know the student’s awareness of their learning choices. There had been 240 participants and 120 female students and also 120 male students who took part in the survey. The data taken from the respondents had been analyzed factually to get the results. These results indicated that the mean value attained 63.92 for the rural participant, and the mean value for urban participants is 61.54. The value of standard deviation for rural areas participants is 7.13 had greater than 0.5 and 7.97 for urban participants which are insignificant and seemed to have no impact over the variables. The mean difference value for both urban and rural is 2.37. The significant value is recorded as .016 for factor 3. The data taken from the respondents had been analyzed factually to get the results. These results indicated that mean value 37.56 attained for the rural participant and the mean value 35.65 for urban areas participants. The value of standard deviation for male participants is 4.41 had been greater than 0.5 and 5.20; it showed up for urban area participants and for which is insignificant and seemed to have no impact over the variables. The mean difference value for urban and rural is 1.90. The significant value is recorded as .002 for factor 4.

Table 3. Correlation of Factors of Learning Choices of Students

		F1	F2	F3	F4
Identify the interest of learning choices of students	Pearson Correlation				
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	240			
Reasons involve in making learning choices	Pearson Correlation	.425**			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	240	240		
Impact of learning choices on academic achievement	Pearson Correlation	.417**	.622**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	240	240	240	
Factors that influences on learning choices of students	Pearson Correlation	.282**	.489**	.573**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	240	240	240	240

A correlation matrix among the dimension of learning choices of students shows a moderate and high relationship. The reason involves in making learning choices has a moderate correlation with Impact of learning choices on academic achievement ($r = .425, p < .01$) and high correlation with Factors that influences on learning choices of students ($r = .417, p < .01$). Moreover, the reason involves in making learning choices has a moderate correlation with factors involved in learning choices of students ($r = .489, p < .01$).

Conclusions of the Study

The first objective of this study is to examine the Impact of learning choices on academic achievement and its effect. Empirically, it is concluded that most students were of the view that students know their abilities, skills, competencies, strengths and weakness which has Impacted on academic achievement, freedom of choice and democracy in learning choices, student's learning motivation and good incentives and right and wrong learning choices were highly effected on academic achievement. The second objective of this study is the factors that influence the learning choices of students after higher secondary schools. On the basis of the result of the study it is concluded that student was of the view students were find it difficult to decide which learning course will be better for their future and preferred lifestyle, economic status, family background, values societal background, have no clear direction, illiterate parents, low quality in education, cultural norms, stereotype behavior, and gender factor influences on students learning choices.

Discussion

Choosing a learning course in a particular field has a long-lasting effect on students' future. Students were asked about the learning choices after higher secondary schools. Most of the students were opined that they feel autonomous while taking the decision of their learning course. They develop a sense of choice that is personally meaningful. Students must see real differences in the importance of learning choices. Learning choices can impact on students' spirits of relatedness differently depending on their interest. The choice of right subject is the most difficult decision for students. After completing the 12 grade, mostly, students were confused about choosing the right learning course that makes them a successful person in his/her field. Some studies show that the right choices have a positive influence on students learning and keep them motivate ([Assor, Kaplan, & Roth, 2002](#)). Students were asked about to choose the learning course based on their interest. There is a need for proper guidance and counseling for higher secondary students to make learning choices. Students 'learning choices must be according to their interest because they result in beneficial outcomes, such as to become an active and responsible citizen in this competitive world. Students understand the power of meaningful learning choices, particularly that the subject aligns with their values, interests and learning goals. Studies show that schools play an important role in shaping the learning choices of students ([Jin et al., 2011](#)). Universities offered 'the most option' in the kind of subject choices to the young students ([Russell Group, 2013](#)). We begin to explore students learning choices is not depending only on their interest, personal characteristics, abilities, skills and competences but also depend on their socio-economic status, gender and on the composition of their school in terms of their prior achievement. It is, however, some study in other contexts by other article on this issue, that learning choice does affect educational achievement (Dilnot, 2018; [Moulton, Henderson, Anders, & Sullivan, 2018](#)). It can be said that socio-economic background, siblings' pressure, close friend, gender, prior academic achievement and community expectations are all associated with the learning choices of the subject (Henderson et al., 2018).

Recommendations

- As the third objective of the study was to recommend suitable strategies for the learning choices of students, the majority of parents have done early planning for their future study that does not match with students' interest. The parents should always encourage, motivate the students; intrinsic motivation provides proper guidance. The teacher and parents must cooperate with the students in their learning choices. They must ensure that the child has an interest in a particular course. The teacher must develop academic self-awareness in students to make the right learning choices.
- Ask the students how they feel choosing a learning course. Is it important to them? What are their difficulties? They will let them know learning choices is important for their future; family values, societal background, and gender factor have many influences on students learning choices. Higher Secondary school teachers have a responsibility to promote awareness about new and emerging learning courses. If the industry, government and educational system have sought to incentive young students to take a combination of subjects running that this provides the young learner with the skills they need for the future.

- The poor economic status of a student influences on students education due to overestimating and underestimating their economic situation. Students should not confine themselves to just one opportunity, nor should they stop trying if one possible opportunity dries up. There are many opportunities where students find themselves intellectually qualified in a certain area. Industry and government must support and energies in any way it can, to ensure students acquiring the needed skills and work habit to successes. They can provide a problem-solving solution from which students could benefit.

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