



## PREDICTORS ON THE CHOICE OF FIELD OF CONCENTRATION OF THE STUDENTS OF THE COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION

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**ABSTRACT:** *Deciding on the field of concentration upon entering in a college or university is a daunting task. A lot of considerations are taken into account because of several contributory factors. College instruction provides opportunities for student to grow educationally as well as responsibility. Students faced the anguish of choosing their career path because of the many factors affecting such decision. Some students may consider their strengths and weaknesses in the selection of field of concentration, their talents, abilities and capabilities and most significantly, their capability to finance their college education. The study aimed to determine the factors that may affect the choice of field of specialization of students of the College of Teacher Education. This study utilized the descriptive survey design. According to Dr. Y.P. Aggarwal (2008) descriptive research is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation. This type of research method is not simply amassing and tabulating facts but includes proper analyses, interpretation, comparisons, identification of trends and relationships. The data collection instrument used in this study was a modified questionnaire which was patterned from the study of Jamille Fernandez study (2015-2016). In the treatment of the collected data using the 5-point Likert scale, the weighted mean was used. The following statistical treatment used for better analysis and interpretation of data. Based from the emerged results of this study, it therefore concluded that parents and peer factors have greatly affected the choice of the respondent on the field of concentration as they enter college. Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it is strongly recommended that the respondents must choose a concentration that suits their capabilities, talents and abilities in order for them have a greater opportunity of developing their strengths and proper guidance should be accorded to them while still in the process of developing or deciding on what specialization should they pursue in College*

**KEYWORDS:** *predictors, field of concentration, parent factor, peer factor, capability, ability, talents*



## **INTRODUCTION**

Deciding on the field of concentration upon entering in a college or university is a daunting task. A lot of considerations are taken into account because of several contributory factors. College instruction provides opportunities for student to grow educationally as well as responsibility. Students faced the anguish of choosing their career path because of the many factors affecting such decision. Some students may consider their strengths and weaknesses in the selection of field of concentration, their abilities and capabilities and most significantly, their capability to finance their college education.

How students have seen themselves in a role in which personality is a determining factor may influence a chosen career. Some careers demand that you have the personality to match the qualities of the future profession. Splaver (1997) said "personality" plays an important role in choosing the right career. According to him, "It is important for you to have a good understanding of yourself, your personality, if you are to make intelligent career plans" (Splaver, 1997). Another factor involved is the external factor which may influence the students' choice of specialization. Perhaps someone in the student's life has made a significant impact or impression, leading to a definite choice of specialization. Someone they saw on television may have influenced the students, or parents may have demanded that they assume a family business. These are various external factors that would lead a student to a chosen career.

Many studies have stressed the importance of external factor such as on a young person's career development and one such factor is parental influence. A study by Ferreira (2006) established that parental influence in one of the multiple developmental contexts that have a bearing on the vocational behavior of adolescents. Stambler (1998) suggest that when young people have to choose their occupation, parents are clearly influential in their career choice. Biggart (2004) stated that 21% of students claim that their choice is made collaboratively with their parents and perhaps surprisingly, around 2 percent of respondents' state that their parents are the main drivers behind their actual decisions. Whiston and Keller (2004) confirm that many studies have documented that young people perceive parents as influencing their career choices.



Another influencing factor is parents' status which sets of stage for experience that influences many dimensions of their children's lives (Maher and Kroska, 2002) including the educational and occupational opportunities available to that individual and the attainments that he or she achieves. Categories of both supportive and hindering parental influences can after have a bearing on a young person's choice behavior (Lent, 1998). An absence of parent support can be viewed as a hindering factor from parents, forming parental barriers to particular career choices. Conversely, an increase of support from parents might decrease students' perception of barriers, as (Ali, 2005) suggest in his research. Cinstantine (2005) research examines the extent to which perceived parental supports in the career certainly and career decision in a sample of African-American adolescents. The result confirms the importance of considering perceived parental supports in the career decision – making process. Additionally, Whiston and Keller (2004) assert that children who perceive their families as supportive and as having high expectations tend to have higher occupational aspirations than others. Rush (2002) also notes that having a supportive family environment is associated with the successful negotiation of career development. Ypung(1991) state that parental encouragement, direction and communication are major factors in the vocational development of children. The researchers therefore conclude that among the pre-determined factors under external factors, parental influences may have the strongest impact on the students' choice.

Throughout a career, an individual seeks to accommodate the environment with one's goals, while at the same time being incorporated into the environment (Kroll, Dinklage, Lee, Morley, & Wilson, 1970). Career and choice development is the balancing of recognizing and meeting needs of the individual while at the same time responding to the outer forces and realities of life. Specialization decision factors involve two sets of input: the self and the world of work. The individual in a career has constantly balanced one's aspirations and how they have fitted into the reality of the workplace. "Man's occupation determines the kind of person he becomes since, through his waking hours, his cognitions about himself, his wants and goals, and his interpersonal response traits are molded" (Kroll et al., 1970, p. 19). Kroll went on to say that much of the informal and formal knowledge provided through our society and our environment has focused on the acquisition, retention, and utilization of



information pertaining to the world. We have observed that both the self and the world emerge as important factors in the constructs that we have attained, in that they have become the important features in the acquisition, retention, and translation of information about one's self (Kroll et al., 1970). (Greenberger, 2002, p. 2) Schools in some states have been able to do a better job in creating a better environment for students who want to cross gender lines while choosing a specialization. Skills present in males and females alike have been indicative of their vocational interests.

Flower day and Schraw (2003) acknowledged that according to the enhanced cognitive enhancement theory which allowing the students to choose which classes they enroll in increases motivation and independence which in turn increases a student's cognitive processing and performance. Moreover, Flower day and Schraw (2003) students are influenced by the different academic portions of the class such as the value of the content, the structure, and the process.

Kroll (Kroll et al., 1970) cited Super's own research, which indicates that the decision making process concerning one's career is not so much a function of the information amassed to the individual, but more the process of maturity and planning. Kroll cites Clarke, Gelatt, and Levine in which they stressed that good decision-making relied upon adequate information and effective strategies for making choice.

Kroll has provided models of the decision making process. (Kroll et al., 1970) describes five noticeable steps described: the reflective state, suggestions, intellectualization, hypothesis, and then reasoning. Along the same lines as Dewey's description is another from Poyla. Poyla (cited in Kroll et al., 1970) described four basic areas in the decision making process 1) understanding the problem, 2) seeing how various items of the problem are linked in order to formulate a plan, 3) carrying out the plan, and 4) reviewing and discussing the completed solution. Brim, Glass, Lavin, and Goodman work from different points of view utilizing a basic scientific method exploring how people make decisions. Their decision making model includes problem identification, information acquisition, solution production, solution evaluation, strategy selection, and actual performance with subsequent learning and revision (cited in Kroll et. al., 1970). Tiedman and O'Hara have stated their process in phases (cited in Kroll et. al., 1970). The phases have dealt with anticipation, crystallization, decision,



clarification, implementation or adjustment. Decision making in career choices stated Kroll (et al., 1970) "is a constant, continuing process even though some decisions are required now that can be changed later only at great emotional, time, or financial costs to the decider" (p. 137).

Personal values and desires have seldom been realized without the active and conscious efforts on the part of the student. The student must be motivated to orchestrate the outcome. If the student wants to work in the career choice process, the student must know and understand the realities of that process. Only when the student has developed awareness, can they begin to avoid dealing with the myths within the process as a whole. It is at that point the student develops a practical plan of action to get what they want from the decisions of their career choice. Most students have built career plans on the myths of what we think should be rather on the reality.

Choice of specialization and education do not always synchronize the abilities to the opportunities. "Recent studies show that one in three college graduates could not find employment requiring a college degree" (National Commission', 1989). Usually the opposite is true. This is shown to be a new twist on an old line. The study also stated that relevant work experience has given students an upper hand in building a choice of interest. Experience rather than education seemed to carry more value in some career choices. A statement from the National Commission on Cooperative Education went on to say that cooperative education combined educational, financial, and career building opportunities. High school students (and parents of those students) should be aware of opportunities such as cooperative education. The commission stated that cooperative education, which has existed for over 90 years should be an important criterion for selecting the right college.

Many times the career that the student may have finally settled on, after much anguish, may no longer exist when the student is ready (Kerka, 1997), stated that as a result of the downsizing and reorganization of the past decade, many organizations have pared down to "core groups of full-time employees complemented by part-timers and networks for flexible staffing".

(Kerka, 1997 p.1). Kerka stated that training to be portfolio workers, managing our skills as if we were our own job entity, may be the opportunities students will be faced with in the



future. He stated that individuals should consider themselves a collection of attributes and skills, not a job. The key skills of the portfolio worker are versatility, flexibility, creativity, self-direction, interpersonal and communication skills, a facility with computer and information technology, the ability to learn continuously, and the ability to manage work, time, and money (cited in Kerka, 1997).

(Weiler, 1977, p. viii) All students have seen themselves somewhere on this continuum. In commenting on opportunity, Weiler stated, "No one wants to feel that they lack power over their own lives". Students must honestly evaluate where their best opportunities lie and which ones they can use to the students' best advantage.

Moreover, Lin' and Xie (2009) provide teachers with more choices in teaching and assessment methods, but also allows students to demonstrate what they have learned in many different ways. Lin' and Xie (2009) also said that their research motivation is to use MIs teaching as a means for college students to explore their intelligences as well as an assistance to students to excel in their area of strength and to study and improve their weaknesses.

Furthermore, Natasa (2010) as cited by Ali-Al Faoury, et al. (2011), states that the theory offers a better understanding of students' intelligences and a greater appreciation of their strengths. She adds that it has been considered a milestone for educational innovation not only in the United States but throughout the world that force educators not only to come to a recognition of the diversity of the learners in their learning styles and learning potentials but also to appreciate the development of learning strategies on the part of the learners in the form of "individual instruction" and "independent learning".

According to Keska as cited by Kochung (2011), career choice is influenced by multiple factors including personality, interest, self-concept, cultural identity, globalization, socialization, role model, social support and available resources such as information and financial.

According to Hewitt (2010), factors influencing career choice can either be intrinsic or extrinsic or both. Hewitt (2010) further states the most people are influenced by parents' favor, other follow the career that their educational choices have opened for them, some choose to follow their passion regardless of how much or little it will make them while



others choose that give high income. Bandura, et al. (2001) also as cited by Kochung (2011) states that each individual undertaking the process is influenced by several factors including the context in which they live in their personal aptitudes, social contacts and educational attainment. Pummel, Howard and Lavallee (2008) reports that external influences help to shape an individual's career choice are also influenced by significant others through social support from peers.

Kochung (2011) generalized that choice of career is influenced by parents, friends and counselors SEAMEO Innotech (2012) declared that the K-12 Basic Education curriculum will prepare students with life skills that they earn while schooling. Life skills such as flexibility, initiative, social skills, productivity and leadership equip students to prosper in the classroom and in the world beyond.

Brickman (2006) in high schools, colleges and universities strive to inform students of established principles of knowledge as well as of the most recent development in academic research instruction take place in classrooms, lecture halls, laboratories and other academic settings. When students enroll in a course, teachers provide learning guides or outline of the subject. The learning guides describe how the subject will be taught. It includes a list of the required books and articles, schedules, course examinations, papers, assignments, evaluation of grades of the student performance.

According to Oyamo and Amoth (2008), studies in Kenya show that rural students tend to seek help from parents more than urban students and that parents more than teachers play a major role in the career choice of students. Generally, the choice of a career is influenced by parents, friends, and counselors.

Oketch (2009) the key factor influencing student choice that came out strongly in student interviews was the positive response to the alternative opportunity to participate in tertiary education provided by the higher education institution.

Thus the researchers believe that each individual has specific abilities that would serve as his/her strength to pursue higher learning in his/her field of interest. In order to strengthen one's interest, it is not enough that you know it, but you so know how to use it.

A study conducted by Parason, M.E (2007) entitled Factors Affecting the students' choice of four year high school students in selected Private and Public School; she stated in her



findings that a course that suits their interest is the main concern of the respondents among the factors affecting students' choice. Information about different courses helps students in making smart choices ranked second. A course that offers a lot of employment opportunities is on third place. The researchers therefore conclude that student respondents relied very much in their abilities, expertise, and interest in choosing a course. For them it is important because their capabilities would serve as gauge if they would be able to finish their studies. As observed choices were made personal for factors like family, peers/friends while social prestige scored low. This implies that graduating students are becoming independent in their decision making.

Another study conducted by Aranda, B-G. (2011) entitled "Motivational Factors Affecting Students' Choice", among the three motivational factors; the personal was the most important factor in choosing the right career. This only shows that motivation of students in choosing their course was more on intrinsic and personal.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The study aimed to determine the factors that may affect the choice of field of specialization of students of the College of Teacher Education. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the factors that influenced students' decision on their choice of specialization?
  - a. Parent-related factors
  - b. Peer-related factors
  - c. Student-related factors
  - d. Teacher-related factors
  - e. Subject-related factors
  - f. School-related factors
  - g. Employment-related factors
  
3. Which factor influences most the choice of field of specialization of the students?

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study utilized the descriptive survey design. According to Dr. Y.P. Aggarwal (2008) descriptive research is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions

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or situations for the purpose of description and interpretation. This type of research method is not simply amassing and tabulating facts but includes proper analyses, interpretation, comparisons, identification of trends and relationships. The data collection instrument used in this study was a modified questionnaire which was patterned from the study of Jamille Fernandez study (2015-2016). In the treatment of the collected data using the 5-point Likert scale, the weighted mean was used. The following statistical treatment used for better analysis and interpretation of data.

Weighted Mean	Scale of Interpretation
4.20 - 5.00	to a very great extent
3.40 - 4.19	to a great extent
2.60 - 3.39	to a moderate extent
1.80 - 2.59	to a little extent
1.00 -1.79	not at all

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table1. Item Mean Distribution as to Extent of influence of the Parent-Related Factors on the Students choice of concentration**

Parents Factors	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Value
1. My specialization is my parents' choice	3.22	To a moderate extent
2. My parents motivated me to choose my own specialization.	3.97	To a great extent
3. My parents can't afford to pay my fees to take my own choice	3.15	To a moderate extent
4. My specialization is one of the in demand courses.	4.27	To a very great extent
5. My parents let me decide to choose my own specialization.	4.00	To a great extent
<b>Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>To a very great extent</b>



Table 1 showed the item mean distribution as to extent of influence of the parent-related factors on the students' choice of concentration. As shown from the table, the highest item mean of 4.27 or to a very great extent was on "My specialization is one of the in demand courses". This factor implies that the respondents and their parents took the choice of the field of concentration on what is popular and in demand course at the time of enrollment. Further, this factor may have influenced them for easier employment on the part of the respondents. The weighted mean is 3.72 or to a very great extent implies that the parents of the respondents are a powerful influence in deciding on the field of concentration of the respondents.

**Table 2. Item Mean Distribution as to Extent of influence of the Peer-Related Factors on**

Peer Factors	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Value
1. My friends choose my specialization for me	2.08	To a little extent
2. All of my friends are in just one major	2.33	To a little extent
3. My friends motivated me to choose this specialization.	2.59	To a little extent
4. I don't like my classmates in the other majors	2.54	To a little extent
5. They say that other majors are difficult	3.63	To a great extent
<b>Weighted mean</b>	<b>2.63</b>	<b>To a moderate extent</b>

***the Students choice of concentration***

Table 2 revealed the item mean distribution as to extent of influence of the peer-related factors on the students' choice of concentration. As shown from the table, the highest item mean of 3.63 or to a great extent was on "They say that other majors are difficult" implies that the difficulty of the program has been the major influencing factor on the part of the respondents of choosing other field of concentration. This category got a weighted mean of 2.63 or to a moderate extent implies that the peer factor has not much an influence on the respondents' choice of field of concentration.



**Table 3. Item Mean Distribution as to Extent of influence of the Student-Related Factors on the Students choice of concentration**

Students Factors	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Value
1. This is my interest.	4.23	To a very great extent
2. I have high grades in my specialized subjects	3.76	To a great extent
3. I am being challenged in my specialized subjects.	4.35	To a very great extent
4. I want to learn and explore more about my specialized subjects.	4.58	To a very great extent
5. My choice fits my skills and knowledge.	4.15	To a very extent
<b>Weighted mean</b>	<b>4.21</b>	<b>To a very great extent</b>

Table 3 revealed the item mean distribution as to extent of influence of the student-related factors on the students' choice of concentration. As shown from the table, the highest item mean of 4.58 or to a very great extent was on "I want to learn and explore more about my specialized subjects" implies that the respondents are ready to face the challenges of the program though it may be strange or new to them. This further implies that the respondents may have established themselves with the proper preparation in embracing these challenges in their college life. This category got a weighted mean of 4.21 or to a very great extent implies that the respondents were the ones who chose the field of their own concentration.

**Table 4. Item Mean Distribution as to Extent of influence of the Teacher-Related Factors on the Students choice of concentration**

Teacher factors	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Value
1. My teacher motivated me to choose my specialization.	3.10	To a moderate extent
2. Teachers give high grades	3.35	To a moderate extent
3. I learn a lot from my teacher who teach specialized subjects.	4.08	To a great extent



4. My teacher always give support in my specialization. 5	3.94	To a great extent
5. I don't like the way teachers introduce specialize subjects.	2.64	To a moderate extent
<b>Weighted mean</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>To a great extent</b>

Table 4 revealed the item mean distribution as to extent of influence of the teacher-related factors on the students' choice of concentration. As shown from the table, the highest item mean 4.08 or to a great extent was on the item "I learn a lot from my teacher who teach specialized subjects" which implies that the choice of the respondents on the field of concentration is being influenced by the effectiveness and competence of the teacher teaching the subject. The outstanding performance of the teacher in the delivery of the subject matter has become the motivation of the respondents in taking the same path. This category got a weighted mean of 3.42 or to a great extent implies that the teacher may be a great influence in the choice of the respondents on their field of concentration.

**Table 5. Item Mean Distribution as to Extent of influence of the Subject-Related Factors on the Students choice of concentration**

Subject Factors	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Value
1. I am much interested in my specialized subjects.	4.27	To a very great extent
2. My specialized subjects will improve my skills in my chosen career	4.29	To a very great extent
3. My specialized subjects are easy compared to other specialized subjects	3.52	To a great extent
4. My favorite subject is /are in my specialized subjects.	3.91	To a great extent
5. My specialized subjects are aligned in K-12 program.	3.83	To a great extent
<b>Weighted mean</b>	<b>3.96</b>	<b>To a great extent</b>

Table 5 showed the item mean distribution as to extent of influence of the subject-related factors on the students' choice of concentration. As shown from the table, the highest item mean 4.29 or to a very great extent was on the item "My specialized subjects will improve my skills in my chosen career" which implies that the choice of the respondents on the field of concentration is being influenced by their eagerness to become better persons in their chosen fields. Further, the data imply that their chosen field will definitely provide them the necessary enhancement as future career professionals. This category got a weighted mean



of 3.96 or to a great extent implies that the subject may be a great influence in the choice of the respondents on their field of concentration.

**Table 6. Item Mean Distribution as to Extent of influence of the Opportunity/Employment - Related Factors on the Students choice of concentration**

Opportunity/ Employment Factors	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Value
1. I can easily get a stable job with this specialized major.	4.07	To a great extent
2. My specialized major is in demand.	4.09	To a great extent
3. My specialized major is one of the reasons to get high salary.	3.70	To a great extent
4. The initial salary is one of the major reason.	3.66	To a great extent
5. I will be employed immediately with this specialized major.	3.77	To a great extent
<b>Weighted mean</b>	<b>3.86</b>	<b>To a great extent</b>

Table 6 showed the item mean distribution as to extent of influence of the opportunity/employment-related factors on the students' choice of concentration. As shown from the table, all the item have been rated to a great extent with a category mean of 3.86ch implies that the respondents have already considered this factor in choosing their fields of concentration.

**Table 7.Over-all Weighted Mean of the Extent on the External Factors Students choice of concentration**

Identified Factors	Weighted Mean	Adjectival Value
1. Parent- Related Factors	3.72	To a great extent
2. Peer-Related Factors	2.63	To a moderate extent
3. Student-Related Factors	4.21	To a very great extent
4. Teacher-Related Factors	3.42	To a great extent
5. Subject-Related Factors	3.96	To a great extent
6. Opportunity/ Employment-Related Factors	3.86	To a great extent
<b>Overall Weighted Mean</b>	<b>3.64</b>	<b>To a great extent</b>

Table 7 showed the over-all weighted mean of the extent on the external factors students' choice of concentration. As revealed in the table, the lowest rating of 2.63 belonged to the



peer-related factor which implies that this item have not so much influence on the respondents' decision on choosing their field of concentration. The highest item mean of 4.21 or to a very great extent belonged to the student-related factor which implies that pursuing their field of concentration upon entering college is greatly dependent on the respondents themselves, though several factors may come to play during the process of decision.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based from the emerged results of this study, it therefore concluded that students-related factor and subject-related factor have greatly affected the choice of the respondent on the field of concentration as they enter college.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, it is strongly recommended that the respondents must choose a concentration that suits their capabilities, talents and abilities in order for them have a greater opportunity of developing their strengths and proper guidance should be accorded to them while still in the process of developing or deciding on what specialization should they pursue in College

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