

Exploring Influencing Factor in the Career Choices of adult Students with Visual Impairment: an
Exploratory Research

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**Exploring Influencing Factor in the Career Choices of adult Students with
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ABSTRACT

A career is a particular occupation that anyone adopts. It is based on the foundations of best decision-making skills which involve standardized guidance and appropriate thinking ability. This is the right of every person with a visual impairment to acquire a suitable career. Visually impaired students cope with various factors while deciding their careers. This study aims to

explore the factors, that influence the career choices of students with visual impairment. An exploratory-descriptive qualitative (EDQ) research design was used to conduct this study. A total number of 20 students with a visual impairment from the age group of 18 to 26years(Graduate=11, M.A.= 8, M .Phil=1) was taken as a sample of this study from the academic institutions of Lahore city. A semi-structured interview protocol was developed as a tool for this study. The validity of the research tool was assured with experts' opinions (N=03).The data were analyzed by coding and thematic analysis. Four major themes appeared from the data analysis; career as an opportunity, guidance & counseling, motivation, and effects of career decision making on the socio-economic status. The findings of the research showed that visually impaired individuals with educated family backgrounds, good levels of motivation, and higher education levels were more confident in career choices. It is recommended that visually impaired students must be provided with career counseling to sharpen their decision-making ability to choose a proper profession and combat the challenges of professional life.

Key Words: Students with visual impairment, Career, Choices, Opportunities, Motivation

Introduction

A career is an action and the progress which is adopted by an individual during his life. Academic career development refers to the process by which employers, as well as scholars working in research, teaching, and/or administrative roles in academic and higher education contexts, manage various tasks, behaviors, and experiences within and across jobs and organizations over time, with implications for scholars' work-related identity (Zacher et al., 2018).A career is defined as the sequence and combinations of work-related roles people occupy across their lifespan (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989; Super, 1980).

However, success is not easy for those individuals who suffer from any disability, especially with visual impairment. The eye's functional limitation is considered visual impairment and it results in loss of visual field, distortion of vision, limited visual acuity, difficulty in perception, and earlier mentioned combinations. (Seid et. al., 2022).

Deliberative, timely, and firm planning are very important factors for the successful entry of an adolescent or even an adult. In the decision-making process among adolescents and adults, there are differences. These differences are of two kinds. One of the individuals is those who feel

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difficulty during their decision-making process. While some individuals are those who decide without any difficulty. The difficulties include accessibility to the university, limited financial resources, and domestic ambiguities. Financial knowledge and skills are crucial elements for consumers to effectively participate in today's social and economic life (Dare et al., 2020).

There is a significant impact of visual impairment on learning, career decisions, and development. Visual impairment is significantly associated with unemployment. However, correctable visual impairment does not affect employment (McDonnall, McKnight, 2021). Most of the time, it is the responsibility of educational institutions to facilitate career counselors who could guide the students toward the right way and decision. Career guidance and counseling (CGC) consequently leads to positive outcomes at societal and economic levels (Maguire, Killeen, 2003).

Therefore, this study is beneficial to find out the factors which influence the career decision-making of students with visual impairment.

Statement of the Problem

This research intended to focus on the perception of students with visual impairment about their career decision-making. It also includes the problems while making decisions and choices for a career.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Find the perception of the adult students with visual impairment about a career?
2. Identify the problems experienced by students with visual impairment during career decision-making.
3. Explore the effect of career decision-making on the socioeconomic life of adult students with visual impairment.

1.3 Questions of the Study

The questions of the study were:

1. What is the perception of adult students with visual impairment about careers?
2. What are the problems experienced by the student with visual impairment during career decision-making?
3. What are the effects of career decision-making on the socio-economic status of the person with visual impairment?

Significance of the study

This study is significant in the following ways:

Students with visual impairment are lacking in their visual efficiency which leads them in the right direction in their life. This is also related to the performance of their normal daily tasks. Career opportunities about the best decision-making skills career is an important factor decide. This study is beneficial for students with visual impairment to understand the problems which they face in their normal daily life while deciding on their careers.

Moreover, this study is much helpful for the educators, and teachers of students with visual impairments to help their students whether studying at school or college to make the best decisions for their careers. This study is also useful for career counselors and parents of students with visual impairment to support and encourage their children with visual impairment to move in the right direction for their careers.

Additionally, all policymakers concerned with career opportunities services for students with visual impairment will be watchful on the provision of suitable careers to students with visual impairment after completion of their education based on the decisions for careers.

Limitations and delimitation of the study

The study was limited to the province of Punjab only. The study was delimited only to the students with a visual impairment from the age group of 18 to 26 years.

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Literature Review

Career decision-making is often understood as an important and difficult task that many people face during their lifetime (Amir & Gati, 2006). Career choice is influenced by experiences at school and most importantly by interest (VirtičORCID&ŠorgoORCID, 2022).

There is still consistency in the employment's low rate for persons with visual impairment. Although, the persons with visual impairment have been prepared by their schools through curriculum and numerous activities. The reason is likely the emerging barriers toward access to a job opportunity. Important ones are described here which are transportation problems, unavailability of adaptive equipment, employers' attitudes, accommodations, lack of print, and the general public (McDonnall et. Al., 2015).

Career development is influenced by a family which is contemplated as a key factor. It is considered more as compared to some cultures around the globe (Kimpop et. Al., 2015).

Blind and underprivileged youth, and involved in programs provided by job creation agencies were predicted to have a successful career, influenced by several factors including determination, work experience, educational ability, use of flexible technology, and control environment (McDonnall&Crudden, 2009). Some factors influence the participation of persons with visual impairment in employment. These factors include education and communication training (Goertz, van Lierop, Houkes, & Nijhuis, 2010).

Job search and then job awareness are two kinds of interventions that can increase the motivation level for career development involvement, work skill, social interactions, and promoting family involvement, and work experience (Cavanaugh&Giesen, 2012). There is a very important role of the teachers of visually impaired students to help their students with visual impairment on overcoming those hurdles and obstructions which are posed by their visual challenges. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of only teachers to create such an environment that is accessible and safe for learning in nature. Additionally, it could strengthen students' motivation for performing any learning task as well.

Low economic status and high job stress are the major two reasons for a variety of challenges confronted with the occupation (Hu, 2020), and for these aforementioned barriers, confidence in

career decision making is dampened especially during the transition time from school to work, the skill of career decision self-efficacy (CDSE) (Ulas&Yildirim, 2019). CDSE is concerned with the ability of the individual to believe in engaging in the association with tasks through the process of career decision (Betz &Luzzo, 1996). Similarly, vocational commitment progress is significantly connected with high career decision self-efficacy (Jin et al., 2009) and career decision making is facilitated smoothly (Betz &Luzzo, 1996).

Positive outcomes include career decision self-efficacy, career success, and job satisfaction are all linked with career adaptability among adults, especially for college students (Douglass & Duffy, 2015).

It is believed that career exploration is a positive outcome of career development for students of higher education levels. This belief has also been supported by previous research, but little information is there regarding certain effects on outcomes of benefits of career exploration which are observed out of cultures (Cheung & Arnold., 2014).

Research Methodology

The main purpose of this study was to explore the factors which influence the career decision-making of students with visual impairment. This part of the study deals with the methodology and procedure used to collect and processing of data.

Research Design:-

Anexploratory-descriptive qualitative (EDQ) (Hunter, McCallum, & Howes,2019) research design was used to study the research problem.

Population:-

The population of the study was all visually impaired students from the province of Punjab between the age of 18 to 26 years.

Sample:-

The sample of the study was students with visual impairment (N=20) from the province of Punjab. The age range of participants was 18 years to 26 years. From a gender perspective, the sample of the study was male (N=08) and female (N=12). The sample of the study was collected from the province of Punjab. A purposive or judgmental sampling technique was used to collect the data.

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Instrument of the study:-

A semi-structured interview protocol was developed to collect the data. It contained open-ended probing questions (N=07). The content validity of the instrument was assured by the expert's opinion (N=03).) Each of the respondents had to provide general information about themselves such as age, qualification, and gender in the first part of the questionnaire.

Data Collection Procedure:-

Before starting the data collection process, permission to interview the respondents was obtained. The researcher read and interpret the questionnaire in familiar language to the respondents and recorded their answers. After the recording of responses, the recorded answers were transcribed for bringing into documented form.

Data analysis:-

After the interview transcription, the data were analyzed by using thematic analysis. The interview findings were coded and categorized to explore the themes.

Table.No.1: Themes and their categories emerged from respondents interviews.

Themes	Career	Guidance & Counseling	Career choice problems	Socio-Economic competence
Categories	Interests based jobs	Motivation	Family support	Life quality
	Choice	Parental position	Accessibility	Family
	Narrow scope	Self-concept	Community support	
	Worth	Self- trust	Quota System	
	Employees' attributes			

Study Procedure

The current study was exploratory-descriptive qualitative (EDQ) research. The researchers personally visited all of the respondents and assure them about the integrity of their personal information. The researchers took the responsibility to tell the respondents about the importance of this research and they were assured that the findings from this research were for academic purposes.

After data transcription, appropriate codes were assigned to the similar expressions of the respondents. Four major themes emerged based on different categories. In the end finding, conclusions, educational implications, and recommendations were depicted by the researcher.

Ethical consideration

The researchers tried to maintain the level of ethics and integrity. It has been decided not to highlight the names of the respondent. The informed permission was taken from every individual respondent to comply with the high-level confidentiality, rights to willpower, and morals. Self-rule for moral principles was also continued. Subjects were free to answer because they were informed before the study.

Coding and Thematic Analysis

This part of the study deals with coding and thematic analysis of interview findings. Four major themes emerged after the data analysis.

Research Question 1: What are the views of the persons with visual impairment about careers and their choice?

Theme 1: Career

The person with visual impairment contemplates a career as an opportunity. This theme has emerged from the views of a person with visual impairment considering a career as an opportunity that is interest-oriented (Munaw&Tegegn, 2022).

Category 1: Interests based jobs

2 out of 20 students with visual impairment responded that a career should be based on interest (Abe &Chikoko, 2020). It means that only 10% of the visually impaired hold an opinion of selecting a career based on interest.

Category 2: Choice

10 out of 20 students with visual impairment responded that a career is an opportunity that should be based on choice only. Various options should be there for visually impaired students to

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select a suitable career. It means that 50% of the respondents agreed that visually impaired persons shall opt career of their choice.

Category 3: Narrow scope

4 out of 20 students with visual impairment responded that there is a very limited career opportunity for visually impaired persons. It means that 20% of individuals with visual impairment agreed that there are very limited careers for visually impaired persons.

Category 4: Worth

Students with visual impairment responded that the worth of a career plays an important role for visually impaired adults when deciding on their careers. Around 20% of individuals with visual impairment agreed on the significance of the career in career decision-making.

Category 5: Employees' attributes

The category emerged from the respondents' stress on the personal characteristics of the visually impaired persons including their residual vision, and cognitive and creative abilities as an important factor in their career choices.

Theme 2: Guidance and Counseling

There are two major areas of guidance and counseling which are significant from the perspective of the person with visual impairment. The students opined that they need guidance on career selection and counseling on performing job-related tasks (Yuwono, et. al., 2017). This theme has emerged from the narrations of visually impaired persons' in-depth interviews expressing the importance of motivation, parental position, self-trust, and self-confidence as the most important factors in making suitable career choices (Yaqoob, et. al., 2017).

Category .1: Motivation

This category talks about both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation as important factors when choosing a career. 16 out of 20 individuals with visual impairment narrated that lack of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation is an influential factor in the career choice of visually impaired persons. This category has highlighted the importance of environmental variables, policies, and social circles in the decision of career as well as internal force and urge to acquire a decent career.

Category 2: Parental position

This category has highlighted the role of parents as a vital contributor to the career choices of visually impaired adults. The category has highlighted parents' education, economic condition, profession, and experience in determining the career of their visually impaired offspring.

Category 3: Self-concept

6 of 20 students with visual impairment recommended that students with visual impairment should know their skills and abilities before career decisions. It means that 30% of visually impaired students expressed that self-impression of visually impaired students about themselves, their skills, and abilities first impact their career choices. Initially, they should know their self then they will be able to decide on an appropriate career.

Category 4: Self-trust

1 out of 20 students with visual impairment recommended that self-confidence and trust level are important factors for career decision-making. 5% of the students with visual impairment agreed on the importance of confidence-building for deciding on a career.

Theme 3: Career Choice problems

This theme reflects the problems which are experienced by the person and students with visual impairment during their career decision-making process. These problems include family status, financial constraints, accessibility issues, inadequate community support, and limited vacancies (Qazi&Akhlaq, 2017).

Category 1: Family support

6 of 20 students with visual impairment responded that there is no family support while taking career decisions but family pressure is there. Families of students with visual impairment pressurize to decide on a career that often does not suit visually impaired persons. It means that 40 % of the students with visual impairment agreed on poor family support in career decision-making of students with visual impairment as a major problem.

Category 2: Accessibility

1 of 20 students with visual impairment responded that there is a problem with accessibility including transportation which is a vital problem for them in career decision making. It means

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that only 5 % of the student with visual impairment agreed on accessibility problems for career decision-making.

Category 3: Community Support

4 of 20 students with visual impairment responded that they had a low level of social support from the community in career selection making. It also includes the availability of writers for their exams including social and moral support from society. Poor behavior in society was also included in this perspective. 20% of the students with visual impairment agreed on the problem of no social support for students with visual impairment in career selection.

Category 4: Quota System

2 of 20 students with visual impairment responded that there are very few vacancies announced by the government due to the Quota system affecting their careers. The uncertainty about selection caused reluctance among visually impaired persons to choose a career by themselves. Around 10% of the students with visual impairment have expressed this problem

Theme 4: Socio-Economic competence

This theme reflects the effects of career decision-making on the socio-economic competence of persons with visual impairment. The disturbance of unfortunate socioeconomic status results in no income source and loss of financial leadership which are grave consequences of vision loss (Munaw&Tegegn, 2022).

Category 1: Life quality

According to 30% of the students with visual impairment, inappropriate career decisions and opportunities have a strong impact on the quality of life of visually impaired students. A reciprocal effect between socio-economic status and career decision-making is also expressed by the students with visual impairment.

Category 2: Family

2 of 20 students with visual impairment responded that family situation including illiteracy and knowing no special needs of their children with visual impairment affects their career decision making. It also affects their socio-economic status. It means that 10% of students with visual

impairment agreed on the effect of various family situations on career decision-making of students with visual impairment.

Findings of the Study

1. Perception of the person with visual impairment about career.

A maximum number of adult students with visual impairment declared that there are limited career options and directions for them due to their visual impairment. Only fewer students with visual impairment supported the notion that a career is based on interest. Furthermore, residual vision, parental status, motivation, and cognitive and creative abilities are expressed by the majority of the respondents as important factors in the career choices of visually impaired persons.

2. Problems in Career Decision Making

Maximum students with visual impairment highlighted various problems during their career decision making including poor family support, financial constraints, no availability of career counselors, accessibility problems, no social support, and a quota system.

3. The effects of career decision-making on the socio-economic status.

Maximum students with visual impairment endorsed that career decision-making students with visual impairment affect their economic worth of themselves which ultimately impact on quality of life and social inclusion of students with visual impairment. However, few of the visually impaired respondents expressed no significant link between the socioeconomic competence (either poor or rich) with a suitable career decision.

Discussion

Students with visual impairment face various challenges to maintain their existence in the world. This study was intended to explore the factors which influence the career choices of students with visual impairment. While seeking the perception of the person with visual impairment about career, limited career options are found as the major hurdle in the career decision making. Family expectations influence young people in combined cultures. However, the confidence of the young people is increased for best career decision making and self-efficacy. There was a

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major factor, a personal interest which affects the choices of career for an individual (Twumasi, et al., 2018).

Students with visual impairment experience various problems during career decision-making. These problems include poor family support, financial constraints, no availability of career counselors, accessibility problems, no social support, and less number of vacancies. Thus, career decision-making is interacted with and affected by numerous factors in the complex process of career planning (Jemini-Gashi, 2014).

Additionally, there is a strong role of socio-economic factors in the career decision-making of the students with visual impairment has been established. Poor socioeconomic factor becomes a hurdle in making decision especially innovative and result-oriented. Good socioeconomic status encourages and maintains the level of students with visual impairment in the society where they live. Womack and Shi (2022), have explored a link with the socio-economic status of the students.

Conclusion

To sum up the discussion, it can be mentioned here that a career is an opportunity for students with visual impairment which is based on various thinking abilities and creative ideas. This opportunity is availed only through proper and suitable career decision-making skills. Although, there are various problems in careers decision-making that students with visual impairment cope with. However, these problems can be sorted out through educational and social support. It is also concluded here that students with visual impairment need support from their families. Therefore, awareness regarding career decision-making is significant for families and general society. Career counseling is the key that is supposed to be provided by the institutes.

Keeping in view the findings and recommendations of the study, career decision-making skills can play the role in the sustainable life status of students with visual impairment in their respective societies.

Educational Implications

Implications of this study will put a positive effect on the solution of those problems or challenges which are concerned with career decision-making in contemporary times. The teachers of students with visual impairment will be able to increase the support, encouragement,

and career decision-making skill of their students with visual impairment. Therefore, this study will be supported for sharpening the skill and increasing the trend of career decision-making for visually impaired students.

Recommendations

In the light of the finding of this study, selecting a suitable career for students with visual impairment which are according to their self-skills and abilities, good quality of education, interest-based career, trust, and positive self-concept building, career guidance, skill development, strategies high level of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation are recommended.

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