

Determinants of Career Indecision among Management Undergraduates in Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to identify the significant factors affecting career indecision in light of state university management undergraduates in Sri Lanka. In the light of literature, five independent variables namely self-efficacy, parental influences, the economic condition of the country, poverty level and career counselling facilities were identified. The sample was derived from 153 final year management students from two metropolitan and two rural state universities. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect the necessary data. Multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. As per the key findings of the study, self-efficacy is the most significant factor impacting career indecision. Further, findings reveal that parental influences and career counselling services significantly explain the career indecision among the respondents. An understanding of the determinants of career indecision of management undergraduates is important for career counselling firms as they can pursue strategic intervention to reduce the level of career indecisions among management undergraduates. Further, the policymakers would be benefitted from these findings as they can understand the gravity of the problem along with the root causes behind the issue.

Keywords: *Career indecision, State university students, Self-efficacy, Parental influences, Economic condition, Poverty, Career counselling facilities*

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Introduction

Career indecision, a vibrant phenomenon which is being discussed extensively, is the inability to resolve a particular chosen profession (Feldman, 2003). It is a noteworthy issue among many university graduates (Boo, Wang, & Kim, 2021; Yaghi, & Alabed, 2021). With increased choice of courses at universities, and more opportunities and options to pursue tertiary education, in addition to expanding work opportunities globally, the career decision-making process has become more complex, and as such, more challenging for students (Xu, 2021; Santos, Wang, & Lewis, 2018). Making an appropriate career decision is very important and thus it is quite a pressing issue, especially for young students (Creed, Sawitri, Hood, & Hu, 2021). This phenomenon has been explored by many researchers for several decades mainly to identify key factors contributing to career indecision among various individuals (Pesch, Larson, & Seipel, 2018; Lee & Woo, 2016; Germeijs & Boeck, 2001; Osipow, 1999; Taylor & Betz, 1983).

Some of the determinants identified by previous research include anxiety (Miller, & Rottinghaus, 2014), cultural factors (Atitsogbe, Moumoula, Rochat, Antonietti, & Rossier, 2018), family influences (Nota, Ferrari, Solberg, & Soresi, 2007), language skills (Tuck, Rolfe, & Adair, 1995), poverty (Ukil, 2016), lack of facilities in educational institutions, demographic factors (Winderman, Martin, & Smith, 2017), unawareness about own personalities (Taylor, and Pompa, 1990), skills and talents, educational level (Esters, 2007), self-efficacy (Charokopaki, & Argyropoulou, 2019) and unawareness about the job market (Germeijs & Boeck, 2001). Extensive research had uncovered the significant impact of career barriers such as parental influence, financial support, availability of job opportunities, and career counselling on career indecision in different parts of the world (Creed et al., 2021). Most of the previous studies on career indecision aimed at exploring significant

factors that influence career indecision among college students of the western orientation. However, none of them focused on university students in a Sri Lankan context. Further, it is challenging to generalize the findings of the studies that are based on students in the developed economy to the Sri Lankan context. This lack of compatibility would be due to the vast differences in the cultural settings, demographics, and economic aspects, and disparities in financial situations of the developed and developing contexts.

In Sri Lanka, entering state universities is highly restricted. The GCE Advanced Level (A/L) examination is very much competitive. Approximately 20 per cent of those who are qualified at the A/L examination gain entrance to the universities. At the same time, when analyzing the statistics released by the University Grants Commission, it is evident that the intake of students to state universities has gradually risen, especially in the Management field, during the past few years. This is yet another factor, for deriving the target sample out of final year management students. Graduates passing out from state universities could be considered a major asset with regard to uplifting the country's economy (Ukil, 2016). Their contribution to the enhancement of the educated workforce is immense (Kruss, McGrath, Petersen, & Gastrow, 2015). Their knowledge at the managerial level is a key factor in the growth of the state as well as private institutions (Salamzadeh, Bidaki, & Vahidi, (2018). However, the issue at hand is, at present the economy of the country has not expanded in order to create more employment opportunities for graduates (Samaranayake, 2016; Chandrasiri, S. (2008). Thus, the graduates are unable to make correct decisions with regard to their career prospects (Varlik, & Apaydin, 2020). This leads to underemployment which is a deterrent as far as gainful employment is concerned. It is imperative to have a high-growth trajectory in terms of the country's economy. Thus, the objective of the present study is to explore the factors influencing



career indecision among management undergraduates in the state university in Sri Lanka.

Research Problem

Graduates passing out from state universities are being considered a significant resource, which would benefit the overall economy of the country in the long run (Hacker, Carr, Abrams, & Brown, 2013). Career indecision is a complex issue which affects the overall growth of an economy (Jemini-Gashi, Duraku, & Kelmendi, 2021). There are over 400,000 unemployed persons in Sri Lanka (Department of Census and Statistics, 2016). According to the Department of Census and Statistics, the unemployment rate was 4.2% at the end of the first quarter of 2016. Career indecision hampers not only the personal advancement of the job seeker but also undermines the expansion of the national economy (Jayathilake, 2020; Jordaan, Burger & Smithard, 2009). Unemployment is the

most significant, immediate consequence of being career indecisive (Kadir, Naghavi, & Subramaniam, 2020). Thus, the overall unemployment figures for the past few years are depicted in Table 01.

When analyzing these statistics, it is apparent that the unemployment rates have either varied very little or risen. This too could be considered as proof of an impending issue about career indecision among young adults, which then leads to the economic development of a country. The number of graduates who are engaged in vital professions is far less than the number of graduates who are engaged in unimportant professions i.e. Development Officers and Management Assistants. These posts were created in order to find solutions to the problem of graduate unemployment. The country’s economy gains very little from them whereas the other professionals’ contribution is immense.

Table 01: Statistical Data on Unemployment Trends

Factor	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<i>Unemployment rate by Gender</i>						
Male	2.7	2.8	3.2	3.1	3.0	2.9
Female	7.1	6.3	6.6	6.5	7.6	7.0
<i>Unemployment rate by selected age group</i>						
20 – 29	12.4	11.3	13.1	13.6	14.2	14.2
20 – 24	17.7	16.7	19.3	19.9	19.7	19.9
25 – 29	7.7	6.6	7.6	8.2	9.4	9.2
<i>Unemployment rate by selected educational level (GCE A/L and above)</i>						
Male	5.4	4.6	5.7	5.4	4.8	4.9
Female	13.2	10.8	11.8	11.1	13.5	11.9

Source: Annual Bulletin (2016), Department of Census and Statistics



Many college students are indecisive when it comes to generating initial occupational preferences (Hacker et al., 2013). Arriving at a career decision is a difficult and anxious task for many college students (Hocson, 2012). It has been estimated that most of the students entering colleges and universities do so without having decided on a career (Boo, & Kim, 2020). Thus, career indecision can be cited as a complex issue which affects the overall growth of an economy (Lipshits-Brazilier, 2018).

In order to identify the prevalence of the issue among management undergraduates in the Sri Lankan context, a mini-survey was conducted, comprising ten undergraduates of the University of Ruhuna. Out of them, eight indicated that they were undecided on a clear-cut career path to embark on, once the degree was completed. Previous empirical research has suggested that occupational decisions are among the most powerful factors that influence people’s lives (Sarwar, & Azmat, 2013; Amundson, Borgen, Iaquinta, Butterfield, & Koert, 2010).

People must make occupational decisions over their entire lifespan (Porfeli, Hartung, & Vondracek, 2008). Hence, inappropriate decisions regarding the career could bring about many negative consequences to both the employee himself as well as to the employing organization. Being undecided can hinder people from taking control of their careers (Savickas, 2013). An employee

entering a particular profession in an indecisive nature would become dissatisfied, demoralized and de-motivated easily (Feldman, 2003). On the other hand, the organization in which he/she is employed at would also be facing losses due to lower productivity, efficiency and effectiveness, wastage of hiring, induction and training costs, and extensive grievance handling (Jaensch, Hirschi, & Freund, 2015). Furthermore, the employee will not be in a position to use his full potential. He has to confront serious limitations in terms of gaining professional achievements. His skills will not be fully utilized in the job market (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994).

In boosting economic growth, the contribution of the educated youth cannot be underestimated (Jayathilake, 2020; Achchuthan, & Nimalathan, 2012). When a graduate faces impediments in choosing his/her career, invariably it negatively affects the socio-economic development of the country (Ariyawansa, 2008; Weerasiri, & Samaraweera, 2021). Graduates should be able to reach.

Literature Review

The phenomenon of interest in the present study is “career indecision”. Definition of career indecision has evolved over decades and the most widely used definitions in the extant literature are listed in Table 02.

Table 02: Evolution of Definition of Career Indecision

Author and Year	Definition
Maree (2016)	Inability to make a decision about the vocation one wishes to pursue.
Penn (2016)	Difficulty or inability to learn about the self, learn about careers and integrate both sources of information to make a career decision.
Lam (2016)	A normal developmental phase that many individuals go through as they make career decisions.
Lee and Woo (2016)	A decision on one’s career to move to the next step in their current position has not been decided yet.



Hartley (2009)	A serious, possibly detrimental, multi-faceted attribute, which may persist throughout an individual's lifespan.
Salami & Aremu (2007)	Viewed as a serious problem characterized by the experience of high levels of uncertainty and anxiety regarding one's career choices and by motivational difficulties with career goal-directed activity.
Germeijs and Boeck (2001)	Denotes problems during the career decision-making process.
Guay, Senecal, Gauthier, & Fernet, (2003).	The inability to make a decision about the vocation one wishes to pursue.
Osipow (1999)	Repeatedly having trouble making career decisions to the point where closure is not reached in time to implement appropriate behaviour.

As illustrated in table 02, there are many inconsistencies as well as similarities in the definitions of career indecision. "Inability" and "Uncertainty" seem to be the widely used terminology in describing this phenomenon. Thus, after reviewing the extant literature, the present study defines career indecision as the inability and uncertainty with regard to deciding upon a chosen career path.

Determinants of Career Indecision

In order to identify the determinants, an extensive literature review was carried out. By reviewing extant literature on career indecision, it is quite evident that the particular phenomenon is being discussed and looked into over the span of so many decades until most recent years (Ukil 2016; Atli, 2016; Lee & Woo 2016; Hartley 2009; Salami & Aremu 2007; Guay et al 2003; Germeijs & Boeck 2001; Jones 1989; Taylor & Betz 1983). By reviewing previous literature, the researcher was able to identify certain similarities as well as inconsistencies with regard to the findings, research methodology as well as the independent variables used to determine career indecision. As far as the determinants of career indecision are concerned, a previous study explored the influence of many individual levels and societal factors on career indecision. Most widely used factors include parental interest, impact from the university, financial support, national shortage of jobs, career counselling, career education, lack of

information, lack of personal ability and political and social reference, personality traits, interpersonal relationships, internal locus of control, positivism, Parental attachment and psychological separation, the role of peers, self-efficacy and autonomy (Ukil, 2016; Atli 2016; Lee & Woo 2016; Hartley 2009; Salami & Aremu 2007; Guay et al 2003; Germeijs & Boeck 2001; Jones 1989; Taylor & Betz 1983).

Taking into account the previous research findings, as illustrated in Figure I, the present study develops a research model incorporating four factors namely parental influences, poverty, career counselling facilities and self-efficacy. Apart from that, upon discussion with experts on this phenomenon, the present study also includes an additional factor that is the economic condition of the country which expects to lead to career indecision, particularly in the Sri Lankan context.

Hypothesis

Self-efficacy is simply the level of confidence that a person posse (Zimmerman, 2000). In this particular situation, the researcher specifically focuses on the individual's confidence in terms of making appropriate career decisions. A person's confidence level would be boosted when he/she is clear about his/her talents, skills, strengths, and self-aspirations (Taylor, and Pompa, 1990).



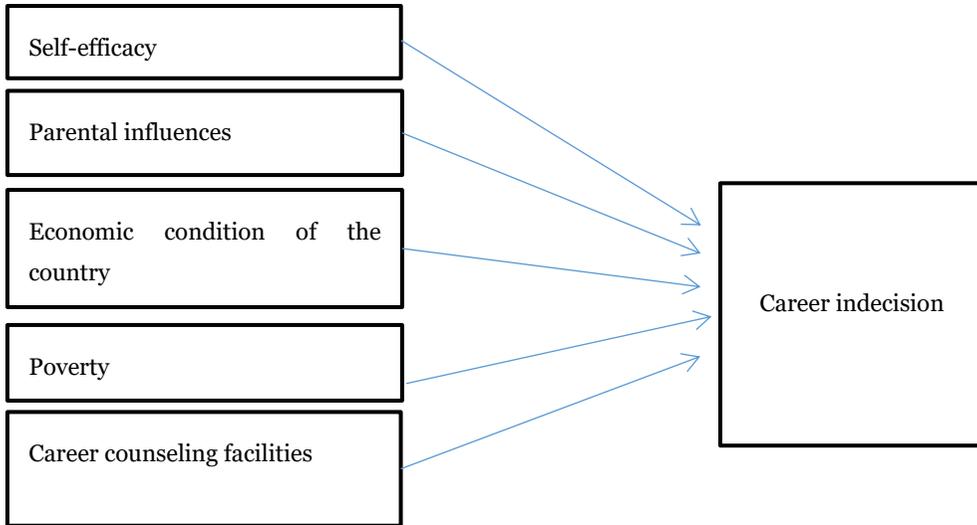


Figure 01: Research Model

Likewise, it is believed that a person who lacks the necessary confidence level is more likely to make poor career decisions (Guay, Ratelle, Senécal, Larose, and Deschênes, 2006). Thus, the researcher perceives that a considerable level of confidence would have a negative impact on being career indecisive. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H1: Self-efficacy is negatively related to career indecision

Many believe that a certain amount of influence on the part of parents as well as peers would help an individual in making appropriate career decisions (Guay et al., 2003). Previous research has also focused on how parental interaction with the children would pave the way to better understanding and develop the child's optimal functioning (Guerra, and Braungart-Rieker, 1999; Schnabel, Alfeld, Eccles, Koller, and Baumert, 2002). Previous authors have demonstrated that authoritative parental styles lead to better performance, competence and autonomy (Vallerand, Fortier, & Guay, 1997). The present study also believes that a certain amount of influence and pressure would lead to proper decision making of students. Thus, the following hypothesis was developed:

H2: Authoritative parental influences are negatively related to career indecision

Sri Lanka's economic growth rate is not very high. At present, it is confined to 5.2% (Central Bank, 2015). The number of unemployed graduates is also remaining at a higher level. According to the Labor Force Survey 2016 of the Department of Census and Statistics, the total rate of unemployment is 4.4% in 2015, and the unemployment among persons who have G.C.E. (A/L) and above is 8.3%. While the unemployment rate has continued to decline, graduate unemployment remains high. Due to limited employment opportunities for educated youth, many would find themselves being restricted to very few jobs. Sri Lanka's inflow of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) is not satisfactory. According to the Board of Investment (BOI), FDI has dropped 45.6 per cent to a very low level of slightly over US\$ 300 million in 2016 from US\$ 658 million in 2015. The industrial sector is weak in Sri Lanka. The growth in manufacturing was only 1.7 per cent in 2016 (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Annual Report, 2016). After considering these facts, the present study postulates the following hypothesis.

H3: Poor economic condition is positively related to career indecision

Many would-be facing constraints in terms of financial resources. There are many university graduates without sufficient sources of financial resources. Thus, they face grave economic difficulties. Such graduates would be forced to make career decisions by considering the monetary gains and related aspects. Due to a lack of financial resources, they are unable to pursue professional courses which would have helped to gain productive employment. Therefore, they face severe restrictions when it comes to choosing appropriate careers. Instead of waiting for good jobs, they are forced to take up employment opportunities which are less appropriate. Thus, the following hypothesis was developed:

H4: Poverty is positively related to career indecision

Based on the availability, many students tend to seek help from career counselling units and such facilities. Career counsellors can assist a great deal in making appropriate and suitable career decisions. Graduates who seek help from such professionals tend to make the right decisions, thereby decreasing the occurrence of career indecision (Amundson, 2006). This leads to claim the following hypothesis:

H5: Provision of career counselling facilities is negatively related to career indecision

Methods

The main focus of the present study is to identify the significant factors leading to career indecision, out of the independent variables of; self-efficacy, parental influences, the economic condition of the country, poverty level and the provision of career counselling facilities. Hence, out of the three research designs exploratory, descriptive and causal, the current study is to be categorized under Descriptive research designs (Zikmund et al, 2010). The research

question of the study is to identify the most significant factors affecting career indecision among state university students. Thereby, the respondents to the survey research would ideally be the final year, university undergraduates. Thus, the unit of analysis for the present study is “individual”.

The research is being carried out in a Sri Lankan context because no previous scholarly works had dealt with the career indecision phenomenon in such a context. The tertiary education sector was selected because it was assumed that it held the most probable segment to become career indecisive. Ultimately, final year, management students were focused upon due to the applicability of the phenomenon interested in this study. At the same time, by reviewing the annual intake and university admission data released by the University Grants Commission of Sri Lanka, it can be observed that there is a steady growth in the Management stream. Thus, the researcher was under the impression that this segment of students would be quite viable when it comes to measuring career indecision.

The target population of the study includes all undergraduates in state universities in Sri Lanka. The exact sample which was derived from this population was 153 final year, management undergraduates from the state universities of Ruhuna, Sri Jayawardenapura, Colombo and Sabaragamuwa; with approximately 30 participants from each university. As shown in Table 03, the stratified sampling technique was used to draw the sample.

Non-interactive methods were used in the data collection procedure. Under that, survey questionnaires were administered. This method was adopted due to its advantages such as the cost effectiveness, anonymity of the respondent, absence of any interviewer bias, ability to use standardized, structured and undisguised questions (Hair, Money, Samouel, & Page, 2007). The questionnaire was designed in a manner where the first section dealt with the demographic variables



and general questions, section two comprised of all the questions associated with independent variables and finally the third section of the questionnaire included questions raised on the dependent variable of career indecision. The questionnaires were distributed both as internet survey questionnaires and physically distributed questionnaires. The word format questionnaires were converted into Google Forms using the Google drive, and the link was shared among the targeted group of undergraduate students. On the other hand, with the help of lecturers and students of some of the respective universities, the questionnaires were physically distributed

after taking printouts of the word format. Likewise, 98 responses were received from the internet survey questionnaires and the rest of the 55 responses were obtained via the physically distributed questionnaires. Part of the questionnaire is based on already existing, used scales; while the rest of the measurements the researcher newly created with the assistance of the experts in the respective fields. The previously established and empirically tested scale was extracted from Germeijs and Boeck (2001) consisting of 22 items, as well as the scale by Callanan and Greenhaus (1990) consisting of a total of 32 items, which were adjusted and appropriately used for the present study.

Table 03: Sampling

University	Batch size	10% of the target population	Actual no. of respondents
University of Colombo	421	42.1	39
University of Sri Jayewardenepura	1089	108.9	33
University of Ruhuna	315	31.5	44
Sabaragamuwa University	352	35.2	37

Source: University Grants Commission

Findings and Discussion

In order to ensure face validity, the researcher strived to use pre-established scales as much as possible, by reviewing previous literary work (Zikmund et al, 2010). As for the newly created scales, the researcher developed them by engaging in in-depth discussions with experts who are knowledgeable in this regard. Convergent and discriminant validity were statistically tested using factor analysis. Before implementing the factor analysis, the suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed using three criteria suggested by Hair et al. (2010). First, a visual inspection of the correlation matrix revealed a substantial portion of correlations greater than 0.30. Second, Barlett’s Test of Sphericity provided statistically significant results (approx. chi-square 14227, df 378, sig.000) indicating that

correlations among the variables were sufficient to proceed with factor analysis. Third, the measure of sampling adequacy measured in terms of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) values was observed for both the overall test and each variable. The KMO value for the overall test was 0.827, which exceeds the threshold value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2010). Each variable also indicated KMO values greater than 0.5. In conclusion, all three criteria were met.

Once initial assumptions of factor analysis had been confirmed, all metric variables were factor analyzed. Principal component analysis, which is appropriate for deriving a maximum number of factors to explain a maximum portion of the variance in the original variables (Hair et al., 2010), was used to extract the factor. Since the present



study used previously validated instruments, factors to extract (Hair et al., 2010) was used barring one variable, an a priori criterion in as a criterion to determine the number of which the researcher specified how many factors to be extracted.

Table 04: Factor Structure

Items	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
SE1	.955					
SE2	.949					
SE3	.944					
SE4	.920					
SE5	.941					
PI1		.947				
PI2		.959				
PI3		.910				
PI4		.943				
PI5		.916				
EC1			.856			
EC2			.860			
EC3			.817			
EC4			.862			
POV1				.925		
POV2				.857		
POV3				.920		
POV4				.929		
CCF1					.957	
CCF2					.962	
CCF3					.967	
CCF4					.942	
CCF5					.949	
CI1						.937
CI2						.895
CI3						.859
CI4						.899
CI5						.928

Varimax rotation was used to obtain the rotated factor matrix. As most of the constructs had a well-established theoretical base, items with a factor loading of +/-0.5 and above were selected as significant loadings (Hair et al., 2010). The final factor structure is shown in Table 04.

the Cronbach Alpha values were tested and the results are shown in Table 05. All the variables meet the threshold value of 0.6 confirming the reliability of the measures. Consequently, correlations among variables were tested using person correlation and the results are shown in Table 06.

In order to establish the reliability of the data,

Table 05: Reliability of the Measures

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Self-Efficacy	.974	5
Parental Influence	.969	5
Economic Condition	.879	4
Poverty Level	.933	5
Career Counselling Facilities	.981	5
Career indecision	.949	5

Table 06: Correlations, Means and Standard Deviations

	Mean	SD	SE	PI	EC	P	CC
SE	3.30	1.05					
PI	2.93	1.06	.17**				
EC	4.19	0.65	.14**	.07			
P	2.52	0.95	.05	-.01			
CC	2.96	1.15	.11*	.13**	.17**	.02	
CI	2.36	0.85	.15**	-.13**	-.01	.07	.13**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the pre-established hypotheses. In this particular scenario, regression analysis is being used to explain the variance of the dependent variable, based on the independent variables. Regression results are shown in Table 07. The Adjusted R Square value amounts to only 0.062. Thus, the analysis predicts that 93.8% of the variance would be due to other factors omitted by the researcher. By analyzing the ANOVA table, the significance of the F value is proven to be less

than 0.05. When analyzing the five independent variables, the significance values exceed 0.05 for the two variables of poverty and economic condition, thereby proving that these two factors do not have a significant impact on being career indecisive. Thereby, those two hypotheses would be rejected. Since the magnitude of the Beta value is higher for the independent variable of self-efficacy, it could be assumed that this is the most significant factor impacting the variance of the dependent variable.



Table 07: Regression Result

Variable	Standardized Coefficients				Co-linearity statistics	
	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	.334		6.29	.00		
Self-efficacy	.041	-.17	-3.53	.00	.94	1.06
Parental influence	.040	-.17	-3.45	.00	.95	1.04
Economic condition	.066	-.04	-.80	.42	.92	1.07
Poverty	.044	.05	1.02	.30	.96	1.03
Career Counselling facilities	.037	-.13	2.77	.00	.94	1.05

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 was supported through the regression analysis ($b=-0.177$, $\text{sig}=0.000$). With the magnitude of the β value, it is evident that this is the most significant variable that affects the variance of the dependent variable of career indecision. At the same time, the Beta coefficient has a negative sign, supporting the direction of the hypothesis. The findings of the present study confirm the results of Taylor & Betz (1983), Guay et al. (2003), Jones (1989) and Ukil (2016). The findings of all these research work stated that self-efficacy strongly impacts career indecision that the lack of personal ability negatively affects career indecision and also that self-clarity and confidence have major implications on being career indecisive. Thus, the results obtained for the present study further establish the findings of previous research work.

Hypothesis 2 was supported by the results obtained via the regression analysis ($b=-0.174$, $\text{sig}=0.000$). It could be justified that, when parents impose various options and ideas regarding a child's career, the clarity of making an appropriate career choice enhances. The child may become more exposed to viable and suitable career options which he or she can choose from. Previous research work by Ukil (2016), Hartley (2009), Sarami & Aremu (2007) and Guay et al (2003), found the same conclusions stating

that parental attachment, parental education and involvement have major implications on career indecision, lack of parental support and parental interest would lead to high levels of career indecision. Thus, inconsistent with the previous studies, the present study found empirical support for this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3 claims that poor economic condition is positively related to career indecision. This variable, which was arrived upon through a discussion with experts could not be backed up by previous research work. However, the present study did not find empirical support for this hypothesis ($b=-0.041$, $\text{sig}=0.424$). Though almost all of the respondents have agreed that the current economic condition of Sri Lanka is very much poor, perhaps since it is an uncontrollable factor by a single individual, it clearly does not have any major implications on being career indecisive.

Hypothesis 4 postulates that poverty is positively related to career indecision. The present study also did not find empirical support for this relationship ($b=-0.051$, $\text{sig}=0.353$). The same probable cause could be cited, which is the inability to individually control this variable. Thus, it may be an insignificant factor leading to the variance of the dependent variable. When reviewing previous literature, Ukil (2016), mentioned that financial constraints have an impact on creating career indecision among college



students. However, the present study, found that poverty level is not a significant factor when it comes to determining career indecision. Thus, the results are inconsistent with the findings of previous research work.

Hypothesis 5 claims that career counselling facilities are negatively related to career indecision. The present study found empirical support for this hypothesis ($b = -0.139$, $sig = 0.006$). Though this too is an uncontrollable factor by a single individual, the reason behind the acceptance of the hypothesis could be the fact that it has a direct relationship with making career choices and choosing among various career options. Upon reviewing previous literature, Ukil (2016) contend that lack of career counselling leads to career indecision, while Atli (2016) reported that career counselling sessions lower career indecisiveness. Moreover, Taylor & Betz (1983) also suggested that sufficient occupational information and support lead to proper goal selection. Since the present study's hypothesis was supported by the regression analysis results, it validates the previous research findings.

Conclusion

The aim of the study is to identify significant factors that explain the variance of career indecision. Based on the regression analysis study found that self-efficacy, parental influences, and career counselling facilities significantly influence on career indecision among management undergraduates. However, poverty and economic condition were not identified as significant factors in explaining career indecision.

The main theoretical contribution of the study is the revelation that self-efficacy is the most significant factor affecting career indecision out of the selected independent variables. In addition to that, it was also revealed that parental influences and guidance also play an equally important role when it comes to explaining the variance in career indecision. The independent variable

of economic condition was a self-introduced variable to the study, by the researcher, after an in-depth discussion with experts. But the regression analysis results depicted that this is not a significant factor when it comes to defining the variance of career indecision. The researcher's intention was to emphasize the fact that in an underprivileged economic setting of a nation, making apt career decisions would be a barrier. If by any chance, the sample size could have been increased beyond a meagre 153 responses, perhaps the significance of this factor could have been proven. Since no other research work had been done in a Sri Lankan context with regard to this particular phenomenon of career indecision, it too could be cited as a theoretical contribution to this study.

From a practical perspective, there are various contributions that could be drawn from this study. The research findings could also be applied in providing government-sponsored career guidance programs within state universities, career counselling facilities and career guidance units established at school levels and so on; especially since career counselling facilities have been proven to be quite a significant factor when it comes to explaining career indecision. Various institutions such as the National Human Resource Development Council of Sri Lanka, Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) and even Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) would benefit from the research findings when designing human resource development programs; especially if they are to focus on and emphasize on the development of the aptitude, self-exploration and the self-efficacy of undergraduates and college students.

Government institutions and related policymakers too would be in a position to identify drawbacks and rectify errors when formulating relevant policies. Society at large could be practically benefited from the research findings if they recognize the importance of the role played by parents in a family structure, so as to mitigate the creation of career indecision related problems; as the



research findings implied that parental influence and intervention have a significant positive impact in reducing career indecision among young adults.

Limitations and Future Research

A major limitation of this research is the limited sample size of respondents. Though the researcher intended to collect responses from a sample size comprising of at least 200, due to the poor response rate, was forced to settle for only 153 responses. If the sample size could have expanded beyond this, more vigorous results could have been obtained, which could have been generalized in a broader manner. With regard to the context of the sample derived, the researcher was limited to using only four state universities out of a total count of thirteen state universities within Sri Lanka.

A major issue in terms of the research design was the cross-sectional data collection carried out by the researcher. That is, the data was collected only during one instance. Career indecision is a phenomenon that could change over time. Theories dealing with social sciences have a tendency of changing with the progress of time. Ideally, in order to get a reliable output, the collection of data should have been done over the expanse of a particular time span. Yet another similar limitation was in terms of the data collection tool used by the researcher. Only self-administered survey questionnaires were used to collect data from the sample group. If multiple tools were used to collect data, it would have been easier to statistically prove the findings. At the same time, the very same survey paper was used to collect data on both the dependent variable as well the independent variables.

The research model used by the researcher was also comprised of only five independent variables so as to define and explain the variance of the dependent variable of career indecision. There could be many more significant factors omitted by the researcher when designing the conceptual model, such

as the career salience, information on alternative options, vocational interests, career search behaviour etc.

In future research implications and directions, impending researchers could expand the sample size, as a start. With the expansion of the target population size, it would be easier to generalize the findings and the output received would be much more vigorous. At the same time, more universities could be included in the derived sample. So as to further elaborate this point, if geographic-wise the impact on career indecision is to be measured, more number of both rural as well as metropolitan universities could be selected, rather than being limited to only two from each.

Without limiting to only survey questionnaires, future researchers could use multiple data collection methods such as coupling the self-administered questionnaires with interviews and focus-group discussions, so as to derive much more in-depth information from the sample set. Different modes and methods could be appropriately applied to collect data on the dependent variable and the independent variables separately. Even though from a practical perspective it could be a bit challenging, it is always advisable to opt for longitudinal data collection methods rather than sticking to cross-sectional data collection. That is, the data could be collected at various points in time so that the changes in the responses over time could be identified.

Future researchers could focus on additional independent variables which could have a more significant impact on the variance of career indecision. This future implication could definitely bring out more substantial results, especially since the model fit of the present study is extremely low; while also two of the pre-established hypotheses got flatly rejected.



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