

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS INFLUENCING THE VOCATIONAL DECISION MAKING OF FEMALE STUDENTS AT MASTERS LEVEL IN UNIVERSITY

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of the study was to analyze the factors influencing vocational decision making of university female students at M.A. /M.Sc level. The study was delimited to twenty one (21) Arts Departments and (9) Science Departments of B.Z.U Multan. All the female students of M.A. /M.Sc level were taken as population. The sample was selected by using simple random sampling technique. The total sample comprised two hundred and sixty eight (268) female students. For this purpose a questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire comprised twenty eight (28) restricted response items and open-ended item. The questionnaire was designed in English. The questionnaire was developed and analyzed on the basis of five point Likert scale. For all the negative statements the order was reversed. The questionnaire was administered personally by the researchers. The rate of returning the questionnaire was hundred (100%). To reach certain conclusion, Arithmetic mean, Percentage and (z) test were calculated. Data were analyzed statement - wise, percentage - wise and mean performance - wise. On the whole, it was found from the study that: There was no significant difference between the responses of Arts and Science female students. Mean score shows the better responses of science female students. According to percentage - wise analysis on 90% of the statements, the mean score was greater than 3.00.*

**Keywords:** vocational decision making, influencing factors, female students

### INTRODUCTION

The word vocation stems from Latin verb “vocare”, which means “to call”. Thus a vocation is a calling to a way of life (rather than to a particular job). (<http://www.providence.org/PHS/Archives/Historyonline/SPvocabulary.htm>)

Vocation is a regular occupation especially one for which a person is particularly suited or qualified. An inclination as if in response to summons, to undertake certain kind of works especially a religious career, calling. (<http://www.answers.com>)

Vocation and occupation are somewhat interchangeable although “occupation” implies more education and experience. Of course, “profession” is generally considered by all to be reference to the higher educated position. A “job” is the term for what does not fit into any of the above. However “job” is also a general term for all of the above. (<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index>)

“A vocation is an occupation for which a person is suited trained or qualified. It is also the inclination to undertake a certain kind of work.” (<http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/vocation>)

Pakistan is a country where 52% of the population is women and now-a-days they are playing a vital role in different fields of life. They prefer their jobs in various fields. The selection of field is effected by various factors. In this regard, Doneel and Koontz (1984, P: 185) says:

*“Decision making requires a rational selection of a course of action”*

Decision making is considered as a major part of planning. As a matter of fact given an awareness of an opportunity and the core of planning is really the description of the decision process. Thus decision making process might be as: a) Premising, b) Identifying alternatives, c) Evaluate the alternatives in terms of goal sought, and d) Choosing of alternatives that is really making a decision

According to Ashfaq and Abdullah Din, (2005, P: 390)

*“Decision making is universally described as the process of choosing between two alternatives”.*

*“Decision making also referred to as problem solving, it is the process recognizing a problem or opportunity and finding a solution to it”.* (<http://www.answers.com>)

A woman reflects on her vocational self-concept and her situation in life and formulates a set of vocational preferences. Because of sex differences in self-concept and situation, her preferences will differ markedly from those of man. The situational factors consider thus for have not been articulated but probably, include a host of social economic and political consideration. Vocational preferences guide job search, in that the woman seeks out these positions expected to satisfy her preferences. A factor that distinguishes the woman's search is that she often can choose the role of home maker.

(Breif and Cell 1999, P: 57)

According to Peterson (1992, P: 40)

*“Vocational decisions depend in part on the perceived costs of various alternatives one cost for woman of commitment to a career is social pressure towards traditional female roles”.*(<http://www.jstore.org/stable>)

Vocational guidance properly conceived organized school work so that the pupil may be helped to discover his own capacities; aptitudes and interest, may himself learn about the character and conditions of occupational life and may himself arrive at an intelligent vocational decision making. Gothard (1985, P: 02)

According to spakman (1991, p: 29)

*“A well organized profession should provide good quality professional development, opportunities and wise guidance”*

Women are playing an important role in the overall development of country. Educational institutions and specially universities are the places where the students take decisions about their vocations. Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all shares of society, including participation in the decision making process and access to power are fundamental for the achievement of quality and peace. The world is also starting to grasp that there is no policy for progress more effective than the empowerment of women and girls. It is generally noticed that majority of the female students can not choose vocation / profession according to their own choice. They often chose the field which is liked by their parents or other family members. Social factors and social environment are also responsible for vocational decision making. Many factors exist here which affect the vocational decisions of female students. Clarification of such factors and issues substantially improve the understanding of vocational decision making among females.

According to Wilson (1994, p: 134)

*“Females were often inclined to follow their friends' career choices. The girls choose the “acceptable” and “harder options” at university rather than their own preferences”*

In the same regard Rimm (2001, p: 247) is of the opinion that parents encourage their daughters to seek female mentors as role models. Women themselves also reported increased self confidence in their vocational capabilities if mentored by a female. So keeping in view the different factors which influence the vocational decisions making of university female students, the present study was

designed. The present study was an analysis of the factors influencing the vocational decision making of university female students.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study were:

1. To analyze the attitude of female students of M.A./M.Sc. towards vocational decision making.
2. To indicate different factors that affects the vocational decision making of university female students.
3. To find out some major factors that affect vocational decision making among university females students.
4. To compare the attitude of Science and Arts university females students towards vocational decision making.

### HYPOTHESES

1. Socio-cultural factors have no effects on vocational decision making of university Female students.
2. Parents' liking and disliking have no effects on vocational decisions of university female students.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study aimed at analyzing the factors influencing the vocational decisions of University female students at M.A. /M.Sc. level. All the female students of M.A. /M.Sc. of Bahauddin Zakariya University were taken as population. The total population comprised two thousand two hundred and fifty eight (2258) female students. Out of the whole population of 30 departments two hundred and sixty eight (268) female students were selected as sample by using simple random sampling technique. As survey was designed to conduct the study, so a questionnaire was developed as a research tool.

For the present study a questionnaire comprising twenty eight (28) restricted response items and one open ended item was developed (Appendix A). All twenty eight items were analyzed by using 5 point Likert type rating scale. The five options for each statement were:

SA (Strongly Agreed), A (Agreed), U (Undecided), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagreed)

The open – ended item was developed to analyze some important factors that influence vocational decision making of female students.

The researcher herself sought permission from the heads of the relevant departments and distributed the questionnaire. Total Two Hundred and Sixty eight (268) questionnaires were distributed and the percentage of returning questionnaire was 100%. The data obtained through survey were tabulated and presented in the form of tables, and pie-charts/graphs.

### STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The data were analyzed percentage wise and mean performance wise. For this purpose, the statistical techniques of arithmetic mean, standard deviation, Z-test and percentage were utilized.

The researcher assigned marks to each positive statement as:

SA	(Strongly Agreed)	5
A	(Agreed)	4
U	(Undecided)	3
D	(Disagree)	2
SD	(Strongly Disagreed)	1

For each negative statement the above order was reversed.

The norm for acceptance or rejection of the statement on the part of the respondents was (3.00). Mean score greater than (3.00) showed the higher level of agreement while the value of mean score less than (3.00) showed higher level of disagreement towards the statement.

**RESULTS**

**Difference between Science And Arts Groups**

The following table I Shows the difference of attitude of science and arts groups.

**Table I Sample Group – Wise Analysis**

Group	N	$\bar{X}$	S.D	C.V (Z)
Science	106	105.35	10.10	0.61
Arts	162	104.36	9.46	

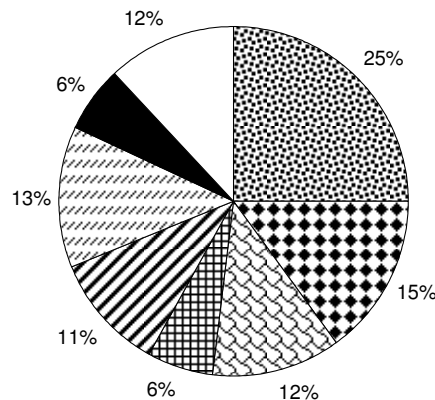
**T. V = 1.96  $\alpha$  (0.5), C. V = 0.61**

Table I shows that the calculated value (0.61) is less than the table value (1.96)  $\alpha$  0.5. It means that there is no significant difference between the responses of female students of Science and Arts group. However the difference of mean shows the better responses the female students of science group about the analysis of factors influencing vocational decision making of university female at M.A. / M.Sc Level.

**Table 2. Analysis Of Open – Ended Question**

Major Factors	Frequency	%age
Salary Package	68	25%
Home environment	40	15%
Social Status	32	12%
Profession of Parents	15	6%
Will of Parents	30	11%
Male dominated society	34	13%
Qualifications	17	6%
Peer Groups effects	32	12%

Table 2 shows the overall general views about the major factors influencing vocational decision making of university female students. According to the table 4.2 twenty five (25%) of the respondents indicated of salary package, (15%) home environment, (12%) social status, (6%) of profession of parents, (11%) will of parents, (13%) male dominated society, (6%) qualifications and (12%) peer groups effects



**Table 3. Statement Wise Analysis**

Each Statement in table 3 was analyzed and the percentage of acceptance as well as mean score were computed to determine the overall effect of various factors in vocational decision making of university female students.

Sr.No.	Statement	Levels	F	% age	Mean
1	Vocational decision making is really a difficult job for female students.	SA	58	22%	3.71
		A	140	52%	
		U	19	7%	
		D	37	14%	
		SD	14	5%	
2	University female students select their vocations according to the will of their parents.	SA	69	26%	3.51
		A	100	37%	
		U	18	7%	
		D	62	23%	
		SD	19	7%	
3	Social environment affects the vacationed decision making of female students.	SA	114	43%	4.27
		A	125	47%	
		U	18	6%	
		D	9	3%	
		SD	2	1%	
4	University female students expect that their vocation must offer better future prospects.	SA	124	46%	4.24
		A	108	41%	
		U	16	6%	
		D	17	6%	
		SD	3	1%	
5	University female students are inspired by any female role model while selecting any vocation.	SA	53	20%	3.52
		A	112	42%	
		U	33	12%	
		D	62	23%	
		SD	8	3%	
6	Peer group effects the vocational decision of university female students.	SA	27	10%	3.38
		A	108	40%	
		U	83	31%	
		D	40	15%	
		SD	10	4%	
7	University female students select a vocation which helps them to support their family.	SA	103	39%	4.10
		A	123	46%	
		U	14	5%	
		D	22	8%	
		SD	6	2%	
8	University female students take more interest in subject that has market value.	SA	88	33%	3.85
		A	106	40%	
		U	26	10%	
		D	41	15%	
		SD	7	2%	
9	The nature of financial problems does not effect the vocational decision making of university female students	SA	23	9%	2.37
		A	42	16%	
		U	25	9%	
		D	100	37%	
		SD	78	29%	

10	In view of security most of the female students like to join teaching as vocation.	SA	124	46%	4.23
		A	114	43%	
		U	4	1%	
		D	20	8%	
		SD	6	2%	
11	University female students select vocations which are not male – dominated.	SA	44	16%	3.28
		A	102	38%	
		U	27	10%	
		D	74	28%	
		SD	21	8%	
12	Teachers' guidance has an important role making decision regarding vocation.	SA	106	39%	4.11
		A	120	45%	
		U	13	5%	
		D	24	9%	
		SD	5	2%	
13	Female students like to continue further studies instead of adopting sub – standard vocation.	SA	70	26%	3.70
		A	105	40%	
		U	44	16%	
		D	41	15%	
		SD	8	3%	
14	University female students prefer to teach at school, as it is an easy job.	SA	59	22%	3.58
		A	108	40%	
		U	42	16%	
		D	47	18%	
		SD	12	4%	
15	University female students prefer to teach as school as it is an easy job.	SA	38	14%	3.02
		A	84	31%	
		U	27	10%	
		D	84	31%	
		SD	35	14%	
16	Teaching is a noble profession for female students.	SA	159	59%	4.42
		A	81	30%	
		U	16	7%	
		D	6	2%	
		SD	6	2%	
17	Media play an active role in vocational decision making.	SA	89	33%	3.98
		A	123	46%	
		U	27	10%	
		D	19	7%	
		SD	10	4%	
18	Profession of father and mother has an impact on the choice of vocation.	SA	88	33%	3.92
		A	118	44%	
		U	22	8%	
		D	33	12%	
		SD	7	3%	
19	University female students prefer Government job.	SA	133	50%	4.13
		A	75	28%	
		U	32	12%	
		D	20	7%	
		SD	8	3%	
20	Rural areas have no attraction for the female job	SA	71	26%	2.42

	seekers.	A	95	35%	
		U	39	15%	
		D	45	16%	
		SD	18	8%	
21	University female students want jobs at the nearest place from their homes.	SA	138	52%	4.41
		A	95	36%	
		U	15	5%	
		D	17	6%	
		SD	3	1%	
22	Family circumstances affect the choice of career for female students.	SA	112	42%	4.23
		A	126	47%	
		U	14	5%	
		D	11	4%	
		SD	5	2%	
23	Salary Package is a factor influencing the choice of vocation.	SA	130	49%	4.24
		A	103	39%	
		U	14	5%	
		D	12	4%	
		SD	9	3%	
24	Vocations related to field work do have negative effect on vocational decision of university female students.	SA	51	19%	3.14
		A	93	35%	
		U	69	26%	
		D	37	14%	
		SD	18	6%	
25	Field work effects the vocational decision of university female students.	SA	65	24%	2.42
		A	145	54%	
		U	33	12%	
		D	21	8%	
		SD	4	2%	

In view of the foregoing 23/25(91%) statements, the level of acceptance was positive which shows that most of the statements were accepted by the female students. The results also highlighted the factors that affect female students' vocational decision.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study indicate that the majority of respondent were in favor of the statement. However discussion is based on general suggestions given by the respondents. As a result of discussion it is suggested that teachers should guide their students in making decisions regarding vocation at university level. Moreover there should be an attractive salary package for females. Female job seekers should be facilitated in rural areas so that they can be convinced to join rural areas also for job. There should be counseling centers in all Universities for the Guidance of female students, regarding vocation. Media should also play an active role in making the awareness regarding vocational decision making in females.

## CONCLUSION

It was found from the study that majority of the university female students had their own positive attitude towards the vocational decisions however some factors were identified which are also shown as results in table II. Some important factors identified were salary package, social pressure and parents' decisions that affect female vocational decisions.

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