

**Economic and Social Factors Affecting Student Decision to Choose Studying Major-Case of Northern Universities in Vietnam****Do Thu Huong, Master**

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The study assesses the influence of factors affecting the choice of majors/schools of non-public students. Thereby, providing science-based conclusions about students' perceptions of study majors, giving recommendations to contribute to improving enrolment of non-public schools, esp. Northern Universities and in the specific case of Dai Nam Universities, Vietnam.

Methods: The paper used both qualitative analysis, analytical and synthesis methods, combined with descriptive statistical methods and statistical processed methods.

Results: This study figures out that family and parent's practical experiences will help students to choose the right majors to study, 2nd factor will belong to advise from teachers and advisors in Universities or Colleges who can recommend suitable industry majors. We also find out that student choice is also affected by their team or friend's groups.

Keywords: industry majors, student choice, decision making, Vietnam universities.**JEL: A11, A14, I21, I25****1. Introduction**

Currently, when the Higher Education Law comes into effect, the open economy separating public and private schools has narrowed the gap. However, most of the current public schools are self-financed, they have a long-standing background in quality, facilities, and a team of experienced faculty and high degrees, so they are not afraid. The barrier to enrollment quotas is flexible in terms of enrollment methods, placing non-public schools in a fierce competition to attract learners and to be able to enroll enough of the approved quota. can survive and grow.

Therefore, universities in Vietnam need to guide student's son choosing the right studying majors for their future career, work, and life.

This paper aims to identify what are factors that affect student's decision in selecting industry majors to study.

Kim (2020) aimed at figuring out the effects of major selecting motivation on dropout, academic achievement, and major satisfactions of college students majoring in food service and culinary arts. To accomplish this, an empirical survey was conducted through a structural equation model. These findings showed that students are likely to drop out of college due to a career change or major maladjustment if they decide their major in consideration of college reputation or department

recognition rather than their aptitude. Unlike existing studies, this study has practical implications concerning the importance of these factors in that their academic achievement is affected by their relationship and perception of their major satisfactions rather than their major selection motivations.

Research questions:

Question 1: What are factors affecting learner's decision to choose the right industry majors to study?

Question 2: What are recommendations to help students in deciding their majors?

2. Literature review**2.1 Scope of research****Research subjects:**

Factors affecting the choice of majors/schools of students in non-public schools in the Northern provinces.

Research scope:

The study is conducted at non-public schools in the northern provinces and is conducted from April 2021 to December 2021. The topic focuses on studying the opinions of students studying at non-public universities in the northern provinces of Vietnam.

2.2 Literature review

First, Malgwi et al (2005) found that interest in the subject was the most important factor for incoming freshmen,



regardless of gender. For women, the next most influential factor was aptitude in the subject. However, men were significantly more influenced by the major's potential for career advancement and job opportunities, and the level of compensation in the field. Students appeared to be driven to change their major because of positive factors about the new major, rather than negative factors related to the old major.

Sanchez (2012) said that the leading criteria for Spanish students interested in pursuing studies in communication sciences were a university's reputation and excellence and the quality of its educational programs. In terms of sources of information related to universities and their degree programs, Spanish communication sciences students placed the highest value on direct and experiential sources. Spanish students interested in pursuing degrees in communication sciences preferred public universities over private universities.

Next, Lien et al (2015) presented results from the analysis of variation (ANOVA) showed differences in how each factor is valued by students of various majors and with different fathers' educational backgrounds in selecting VNU-IS. The results from comparing mean and in-depth interviews also showed that the VNU-IS unique factors such as educating in foreign languages or IS being owned by VNU, from students' perspectives, have the most significant impact on why they choose the school to enroll. These findings have been the solid foundation for some recommendations to enhance the rate and the quality of students enrolling in different majors in VNU-IS.

Then, Ghansah et al (2016) revealed some marketing strategies that can be used in institutions of higher learning to boost students' enrolment in their order of perceived effectiveness. The following were found to influence decisions: Word of mouth (family and friends), proximity/nearness, accreditation/affiliation, affordability, and lecturing Style.

Peter et al (2018) revealed that youth from collectivist cultures were mainly influenced by family expectations, whereby higher career congruence with parents increased career confidence and self-efficacy. Personal interest was highlighted as the major factor that influenced career choice in individualistic settings, and the youth were more independent in their career decision making. Bicultural youth who were more acculturated to their host countries were more intrinsically motivated in their career decision making. Further research is imperative to guide the understanding of parental influence and diversity, particularly for bicultural youths' career prospects and their ability to use the resources available in their new environments to attain meaningful future career goals.

Besides, Hidayat et al (2018) aimed to determine the factors that influence student decisions in choosing private universities in Medan. The variables that were observed were:

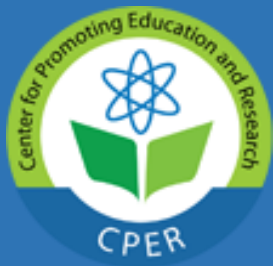
education fee, promotion, brand image, motivation, and facility as exogenous variable and student decision as endogenous variable. The sample was determined by quota sampling on 150 students as respondents. The results of this study indicate that the fee of education, promotion, brand image, motivation, and facilities have a positive and significant effect on the decision of students in choosing private universities in Medan. All constructs forming each variable can explain its existence to latent variables. Moreover, the results of respondents' answers were also found that accreditation is a determining factor for prospective students in choosing private universities in Medan.

Then, Briones and Bueno (2019) mentioned that Students have to take into account many things when choosing a career and college major. The main objective of this study was to investigate the factors affecting the choice of school and degree program of first-year students. Students strongly agreed that it was their personal choice to enroll in their chosen school and degree program. They also strongly agreed that one of the reasons for choosing the school is its well-known high-quality standards, well-qualified instructors/professors, and the school's ability to become home to board passers.

Next, Jalaluddin et al (2019) focused on the three factors which are student attributes, social influence, and financial consideration. Online questionnaires were being distributed as primary data to the secondary school students by sharing the link with a sample size of two hundred respondents. A reliability test was conducted after the collection of data to test the reliability of the variables. Multiple linear regression and Pearson correlation coefficient were used to measure the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variables. The result of this work showed that motivation, family influence, and financial consideration are significantly associated with students' decisions in pursuing higher education.

Moreover, Ouano et al (2019) assessed the influence identified factors such as decision-making and interest, peer influence, considerations about the institutions, and future job opportunities on the career decisions of 90 students in Jagobiao National High School. Data was collected through a survey questionnaire-researchers used a chi-square as a research tool to formulate the collected data. The results show that the considerations about the institutions as most significant, followed by decision-making and interest, peer influence, and future job opportunities.

Last but not least, Abe and Chikoko (2020) stated that Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) educators and stakeholders in South Africa are interested in the ways to STEM students make their career decisions because of the shortages in these critical skills. Although various factors including family, teachers, peers, and career interest have been reported as determinants of career decision-making, there is a



scarcity of studies that have qualitatively explored the levels of influences of any of these factors in the South African context.

3. Methodology

To do the research, the author uses qualitative research methods and quantitative research methods.

- Qualitative research method: Based on the theoretical background and models from previous studies to gather factors affecting the student's decision to choose a major. Then conducting in-depth interviews and discussions to form a survey questionnaire to serve the next research step.

- In Later researches, authors may use SPSS to analyze and process data.

The method of data collection:

The author uses two sources of primary and secondary data from many sources in Vietnam including qualified newspapers, master or doctoral theses, university data, etc.

4. Main results

Research on factors affecting the choice of majors/schools in non-public schools in the Northern provinces.

4.1 Family and parents factor

We put factors in a summarized table following:

Table -

Family and parents factor	Student choice
Parents are those who are the first teachers of their children in family, so they can be first advisors and other relatives and cousins in family can be good advisors for students. Some students might see that their parents who work for governmental companies or agencies with stable salaries and income, then they like it and decide to follow the same industries as their parents chose.	If students trust their parents and relatives, those with practical experiences and good characters, they can use information from family to make a decision on choosing right majors.

4.2. Universities advisors

We put all factors in a summarized table following

Table -

Universities advisors factor	Student choice
In schools, teachers with experience can be students useful advisors. They function both as friends and had business working experience so that they can advise students to choose proper studying majors.	Then students might use information from teachers and school advisors and from parents then make a decision for their future career. Once they decide, they need to be responsible with their choice.

4.3 Friends group

We put all factors in a summarized table following

Table -

Team or friend's groups factor	Student choice
Students may act in the friend's groups and affected by their friends or team. Friends groups were established since students are learning at high schools or junior high schools. They can tell to each other stories about good universities and colleges in big cities and these stories will affect their dreams of selecting right studying schools and industry majors to follow.	However we recognize that students have their own hobbies and their own thinking and preferences, so some students might not be affected easily by team or friends groups and so they make their own decision and decide their own future work and life.

Therefore, students may choose their suitable majors such as medicine, pharmacy, nursing, or engineering, IT software or hardware or programming, social sciences, and humanities or business administration, economics, finance or banking, and marketing, etc.

4.4 Other factors

Also, based on their perception of the costs of studying and expected income or salary after graduation, students can choose the proper studying majors by themselves.

Besides, based on their perception about the usefulness of the studying major, they might decide to choose it or not. Some students might consider un-useful knowledge during their studying and feel the studying programs are boring, then they quit the program and change their studying major, this happens in our universities.

Next, students might consider their family and parent's income so that they can choose a suitable program with affordable studying costs, and the heaviness of the program might offer them an opportunity to find a part-time job after school hours.

5. Discussion

Solutions and recommendations to enhance the choice of suitable majors/schools of students from non-public schools in the Northern provinces and Dai Nam University:

- Students need to obtain experiences from family, parents who have sufficient knowledge and practical experiences to advise them to choose majors
- Students need to ask teachers and study advisors or counselors at their Universities to decide which major to choose.

The valuable knowledge gained will help Dai Nam University in particular and the non-public schools, in general,

have a look, the enrollment channel to attract learners is the basis, the premise for branding and training. to be contributed by qualified students to the overall development of the country.

Sholihah et al (2020) found out College students who chose the school of acupuncture are directly increased by good school reputation, good career guidance, good education programs, strong parental support, good financial assistance, good promotion, low tuition fees, and supportive location. College students who chose the school of acupuncture are indirectly affected by aspiration, attitude, and facilities.

6. Conclusion

Our paper has theoretical contributions: Research topics contribute to systematizing theoretical bases of disciplines and choosing disciplines. At the same time point out the factors that affect students' choice of majors.

Besides, this study also generates practical contribution: Through researching the status of choosing a major of students in non-public schools in the Northern provinces, the study has initially evaluated the status of the student's choice of majors in non-public schools. On the other hand, based on researching factors affecting students' choice of majors, the author gives many recommendations to enhance the selection of appropriate majors and contribute to improving the enrollment of students. non-public schools.

We recognize that family expectation, student's perception, and evaluation, their friend's groups and studying cost or expected income, and the usefulness of the program will be among the main factors for them to select the right studying major.

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