

Factors Which Affect the Career and Subject Preference of the Female Students of Business Schools



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ABSTRACT

*This study is concerned with **career and subject preference** of the female students of management institutes of Indore city. The main objective of the study is to find the factors of selection of specialization. The other objective is to find the factors of carrier choices for the female students. Other than this, the study also works to find the effect of other demographic variables which affect the subject and carries choices of the female students. For the study data has been collected data from few of the renowned Management institutes of Indore*

KEW WORDS: *management education, female education, carrier options, optional subjects, electives*

Introduction

Now a day managerial skills become crucial for organizations to achieve success in a competitive and turbulent business environment, there has been a sharp rise in the demand for managerial professionals worldwide. Sturges *et al.* (2003) proposed that the MBA degree imparts certain key competencies to students. These competencies may be of key

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significance in the career success of students as “management” has gained in importance over other forms of professions.

In recent years, India has experienced a large increase in the number of institutions offering graduate management programs. In 1980 the number of B-School in India was 200. There was a 55 percent increase in the number of institutes imparting management education in India between 1999/2000 and 2005/2006. In the year 2009 a total of 1750 AICTE approved B-School and 350 B-School without AICTE affiliation were running in India. As per AICTE the total number of students intake is 1,37,343 and the number of institutes 1817 for the year 2010 in India. In Madhya Pradesh itself the number of management institutes has increased from nearly 120 in the year 2008 to 225 in 2010, which is nearly twice of the year 2008. The number of students is nearly 28000 in Madhya Pradesh itself. This shows that importance of Management education in India. As the number of institutes increases the competition also increases. In India also the number of B-Schools will rise nearly that of America. Out of all these B-Schools and IIMs which has to be chosen by the students, parents, investors, recruiters for admission or recruiting in short differentiating a B-School from the other B-School is the major concern now a day for students, parents even for faculties and recruiters. In Madhya Pradesh itself the number of management institutes has increased from nearly 120 in the year 2008 to 225 in 2010, which is nearly twice of the year 2008. The number of students is nearly 28000 in Madhya Pradesh itself.

Business factors coupled with several socio-cultural changes have led to changing career preferences among young people in India. An individual's choice of career is likely to be influenced by several factors, including personal and cultural values, family background, career expectations, etc. Studies have been conducted in different cultural contexts to determine the range of factors that influenced students in making career choices (Özbilgin *et al.*, 2005; Kyriacou *et al.*, 2002; Ozkale *et al.*, 2004). However, very less is done for females among management students in India in order to understand their subjective view about why they choose to pursue a career in management.

Female's Education in India

Women constitute almost half of the population in the world. But the hegemonic masculine ideology made them suffer a lot as they were denied

equal opportunities in different parts of the world. The rise of feminist ideas has, however, led to the tremendous improvement of women's condition throughout the world in recent times. Access to education has been one of the most pressing demands of these women's rights movements. Women's education in India has also been a major preoccupation of both the government and civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of the country.

Higher education of women:

The data clearly reveal that the overall representation of women in higher education is poor, and that they are poorly represented in the faculties that lead to prestigious and lucrative occupations such as engineering and management. However it is significant that the decadal increase of enrolment in higher education has consistently been larger for women than for men. The figures are as follows. In the 1950's enrolment of women in higher education increased by 275% and of men by 126.4%, in the 1960's women's enrolment increased by 187.33% and men's by 108.78%, in the 1970's women's by 73.55% and men's by 31.60%, and in the 1980's women's by 92.11% and men's by 49.18%. Women's representation, in all disciplines, has also gone up substantially. Today one sees increasingly larger numbers of women in every field, including those from which they were practically excluded until a few years also. In fact women are moving steadily towards equality in higher education.

Review of Literature

According to Carol Ackah Norma Heaton, Gavin Mc Whinney (1999) the management careers of men and women did differ significantly in a number of respects and that there were differences between male and female graduates in their perceptions of how the MBA has affected their careers. It also found that women, in particular, experienced barriers to their careers which mediated the effects of obtaining a higher level qualification. The paper discusses how a more "level playing field" might be created and pressures reduced for both men and women in management careers. The study of Pixley, Joy (2005) reveals little evidence that those professional women who are strategic in ordering their family and career roles, or in seeking or developing relationships in which their careers are not secondary. Rather, these women are similar to the male students in their choices to make family commitments before their careers are

established, and are more traditionally female in how they balance their careers with their partners' careers. Both behaviors are likely to put them at a disadvantage compared to their male peers. Despite, or perhaps because of, certain structural similarities between male and female professional students, they are unlikely to reap the same benefits from their educational investments. Sue Shaw, Catherine Cassell (2007) examines gender differences in how academics make sense of performance within university business schools in the UK. According to them gender differences exist in the ways women and men define the academic role and in what they think is important both to themselves and the institution.

A study was done by Catherine R. Smith (1998), to comparing women and men students' perceptions of learning advantages and disadvantages in management education. They suggested a masculine bias, which disadvantages both female and male learners. Issues of concern to male students give much greater concern to their female counterparts. Gender paradigms of male educators appear to particularly disadvantage women's learning experiences.

Eugenia Petridou, Aikaterini Sarri and Lida P. Kyrgidou (2009) conducted a study to find the effect of entrepreneurial programs, They revealed that there were differences in participation rates, attitudes towards entrepreneurship education and perceptions about required skills between the two genders. The attitudes towards participation in entrepreneurial educational programs, females demonstrate a stronger interest in acquiring knowledge, developing skills, facing career competition and networking with local business, to a significantly higher degree than their male counterparts. In addition, females rank all skills as of higher significance in successful entrepreneurial activity, assigning lower value only to communication skills, compared to men. The opposite holds for males, who ranked communication skills as of greatest importance among all other skills. The study defines the factors that male and female students consider to be most important in issues of entrepreneurship education are identified, providing a framework for the effective design, quality and delivery of such programs.

Business/management schools may be currently using an exclusive approach to the study and development of management; by ignoring gender in this arena Sharon Mavin, Patricia Bryans (1999) Previously there was a masculine bias in management education, which disadvantages both

female and male learners and which may discourage managers from capitalising on gender diversity in the workplace.

Both men and women were perceived as more suitable for a job that is more typical of the opposite gender. These decisions were mediated fully for women and partially for men by the impact of the gender typicality of the candidate's career on their perceived masculinity or femininity. In addition they also found that, men who had a gender atypical career history were perceived as less suitable for gender typical jobs. Thus, for men a gender atypical career history can serve as a "double edged sword." Shlomo Hareli, Motti Klang, Ursula Hess (2008)

As per the report, "Pipeline's Broken Promise," is one of a series of publications by Catalyst, an organization dedicated to advancing women in the workplace Female MBA graduates earn, on average, \$4,600 less in their first jobs than their male peers and lag in pay and advancement throughout their careers Orlando Sentinel(2010)

According to the business week a roundup of organizations focusing on expanding the role of women in business school and the workplace of US are working such as Forte Foundation: This group was founded in 2001 after a landmark research study titled "Women and the MBA: Gateway to Opportunity" .other then this National Association of Women MBAs: This national not-for-profit holds an annual conference and career fair ever year for MBA women. It also publishes a magazine, The group's mission is to educate women on career opportunities available and help them find their way into leadership positions in the business world.

ASCENT is also one such group, according to it women being one of the largest segments of the workforce in the U.S., multicultural women are disproportionately underrepresented in the workforce. ASCENT, a nonprofit dedicated to helping multicultural women rise to top management positions. The group focuses on developing multicultural women's skills and talent through research, executive education, networking opportunities, and corporate sponsorships.

Kalin, Janice Linden, U Minnesota (1998), suggest that line women were significantly higher on three MSQ scales: ability utilization, achievement, and responsibility. Generally the women were satisfied with their careers and lives. They also suggest that women choosing a career in business need to consider the nature of the position, i.e., line or staff, and the implications of their choice regarding future advancement.

There is influence of culture and gender on the choice of a management career among men and women MBA students in Israel, the USA, the UK, Turkey, Cyprus, Hungary and India Ayala Malach-Pines and Oshrit Kaspi-Baruch (2008). They also found a large cross-cultural differences and small gender differences in the influences and aspirations associated with a career choice in management.

“Skills, competencies, and abilities” was the most important factor and “father” was the most significant individual influencing the career choice of Indian management students Tanuja Agarwala(2008). A Study reveals that attachment was relevant for females' career decision self-efficacy but not for men's. Authoritarian parenting styles were predictive of women's career decision self-efficacy. Locus of control was important for male students but not for females Lease, Suzanne H. and Dahlbeck, David T.(2009)

Objectives

The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out the factors affecting the subject preference (specialization) of women candidates in a Business School
2. To find out the factors affecting the carrier preference decision of women students in a business school
3. The effect of demographic variables on the choice of specialization and Preferred carrier of the female students

These days many families which did not earlier let their daughters go for higher studies but they are now allowing as well encouraging higher and modern education for all their kids irrespective of the gender. But still there are many career decisions which are highly influenced by family, societal and economic background of a female student. The study tries to get an insight as to what extent each of these factors actually influence their decisions

Research Methodology

This is an exploratory research study conducted to find the factor which affects the **career and subject preference of the female students**. A Pilot survey was conducted with a sample of 40 respondents and the

questionnaire was revised. After that a survey was conducted and data was collected with the help of the revised questionnaire.

Population

Indore is one of the important city of the state Madhya Pradesh, it is also known as a education hub of central India. The number of affiliated management institutes in Madhya Pradesh is nearly 250, nearly one third of the total colleges i.e. 77 are in Indore itself due to which we had chosen Indore as the study area. The total number of students in Indore seeking management education is 10,000. Nearly 50% of the students are females, so the population of the study is 5000 students.

Sample

A convenient simple random sampling was done from the following management institutes IMS, IIPS, Gujrati Samaj, Vikrant Institute Indore etc. A sample of 200 was considered for the study with 95% level of confidence and confidence interval of 7-8%

Questionnaire/tool

The questionnaire has two part, the first part of the questionnaire is to grasp the demographic details of the respondents which may affect their choice of carrier and specialization. The second part of the questionnaire involves the 5 point likert scale with 9 variables on subject preference and 12 variables on carrier preference.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Factor Analysis

The main applications of factor analytic techniques are: (1) to reduce the number of variables and (2) to detect structure in the relationships between variables, that is to classify variables. Therefore, factor analysis is applied as a data reduction or structure detection method (Thurstone, 1931).

We for the factor analysis standardized the variables and after that used the standardized variables for further analysis. With the help of factor analysis we can find the factors which are important for the sales from different stores. We had used **Bartlett's test of Sphericity** it is a test statistics used to examine the hypothesis that the variables are uncorrelated in the population. In other words, the population correlation matrix is an identity matrix where each variable correlates perfectly with itself but has no correlation with other variables. A large value rejects the hypothesis and makes the factor analysis appropriate.

KMO measure of sampling is an index used to examine the appropriateness of the factor analysis. High value (0.5 -1.0) makes the factor analysis appropriate From the table KMO and Bartlett's test of Sphericity it is clear that factor analysis is appropriate since both the criterion are satisfied by the data

Objective 1

To find out the factors influencing the subject preference (specialization) of women candidates in a Business School

We have used KMO and Bartlett's test to find weather the factor analysis is to applied or not From the table below the value of KMO is 0.737 and Bartlett's test value is 461.798 with 0.0001 significance hence we can use factor analysis.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.737
	Approx. Chi-Square	461.798
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	36
	Sig.	.000

From the table Total Variance Explained it is clear that the 63% of the variance is explained by the three components

Table 2: Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.541	28.235	28.235
2	1.785	19.829	48.064
3	1.350	15.005	63.069

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The factors are rotated in order to find new factors that are easier to interpret. Here we have used **varimax rotation**. Varimax rotation tries to maximize the variance of each of the factors, so the total amount of variance accounted for is redistributed over the extracted factors.

From the rotated component matrix the variables which form the first component easy to score, easy to understand, Opinion of parents relatives, Opinion of peers and Influence of your mentor someone you admire. Second component availability of faculty and availability of option and Third component job opportunities and Interest

The table below shows the rotated component matrix with the variables and there loadings

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix (a)

	Component		
	1	2	3
easy to score	.869		
easy to understand	.839		
Opinion of parents relatives	.629		
Opinion of peers	.558		
Influence of your mentor Someone you admire	.515		
availability of faculty		.841	
availability of option		.773	
job opportunities			.751
Interest			.731

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

Interpretation

Factor 1: Ease and external influences

Ease to understand, ease to score, parents' opinion, peers opinion and influence of mentors. All these factors are more related to external influences like opinions of the peers and parents, the ease to score and ease to understand also included in the factor

Factor 2: The Management Institute

The second factor is basically about the attributes of the management institute. The component consists of the availability of faculty and the availability of subject options. These factors broadly can be dealt by the improvisation of the institute itself and rendering to the need of diverse subject preferences

Factor 3: Individual's benefit

Interest and job opportunities in the market come under the third factor, which basically are upon individuals benefit. Subject preference come from ones individual interest and job opportunity. Individuals' benefit comes solely from individual's personality and perception

Objective 2

Factors affecting the carrier preference decision of female students in a business school

We have used KMO and Bartlett's test to find weather the factor analysis is to applied or not From the table below the value of KMO is 0.705 and Bartlett's test value is 343.009 with 0.0001 significance hence we can use factor analysis.

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.705
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	343.009
	Df	66
	Sig.	.000

As in the previous objective we have used **varimax rotation**. From the rotated component matrix the variables which form the first component

The table below shows the rotated component matrix with the variables and there loadings

Table 5: Total Variance Explained

Component	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	2.518	20.983	20.983
2	1.729	14.411	35.395
3	1.376	11.470	46.865
4	1.341	11.171	58.036

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 6: Rotated Component Matrix(a)

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Parents financial situation	.737			
social and cultural pressures	.717			
Marriage plans	.634			
family opinion	.615			
Educational background	.599			
company brand		.733		
career growth		.677		
Salary		.633		
job security		.444		
interest in work			.792	
work environment				.790
location of work place				.590

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a Rotation converged in 9 iterations.

The first component include Parents financial, situation, social and cultural, pressures, Marriage plans, family opinion and Educational background. The second component company brand, career growth, Salary and job security. The third component is interest in work. The fourth component is work environment and location of work place.

Interpretation

Factor 1: External Influences

The external components are influences like family opinion, social and cultural influences, parents' financial situation, marriage plans and educational background are categorized under factor 1 on the basis of the rotated component matrix.

Factor 2: The Job offerings

These are the factors under the control of the firm which offers a job to an individual, these include: salary, career growth, company brand and the job security.

Factor 3: Interest

The component 3 covers only one factor of the study that is individuals interest, hence we might conclude that individual's interest on a very strong level can influence ones career decision all on its own.

Factor 4: The place

The factor four is all about the place one wants to work, that is the location of the office(the city) and the work environment (the overall ambience, friendliness etc.),

Objective 3

The effect of demographic variables on the choice of specialization and Preferred carrier of the female students

To find the effect of family income, Father education, father s' profession, Mothers' highest education, Mothers' profession, Number of family member, Position among sibling, medium before MBA, graduation before MBA, work experience before MBA, Specialization and Preferred career on the choice of specialization we have applied chi-square test.

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is No effect of family income on choice of specialization

H₀₂: There is No effect of Father Education on choice of specialization

H₀₃: There is No effect of father profession on choice of specialization

H₀₄: There is No effect of Mother highest education on choice of specialization

H₀₅: There is No effect of Mother Profession on choice of specialization

H₀₆: There is No effect of Number of family member on choice of specialization

H₀₇: There is No effect of Position among sibling on choice of specialization

H₀₈: There is No effect of before MBA medium on choice of specialization

H₀₉: There is No effect of before MBA graduation on choice of specialization

H₀₁₀: There is No effect of before MBA work experience on choice of specialization

H₀₁₁: There is No effect of preferred career on choice of specialization

H₀₁₂: There is No effect of family income on preferred career

H₀₁₃: There is No effect of Father Education on preferred career

H₀₁₄: There is No effect of father profession on preferred career

H₀₁₅: There is No effect of Mother highest education on preferred career

H₀₁₆: There is No effect of Mother Profession on preferred career

H₀₁₇: There is No effect of Number of family member on preferred career

H₀₁₈: There is No effect of Position among sibling on preferred career

H₀₁₉: There is No effect of before MBA medium on preferred career

H₀₂₀: There is No effect of before MBA graduation on preferred career

H₀₂₁: There is No effect of before MBA work experience on preferred career

The table 7 gives the chi-square value, Degree of freedom, and P value for the hypothesis created to test the effect of demographical variables on choice of specialization

Table 7

Hypothesis	chi-square	d.f.	p value	accept/Reject Null hypothesis
H ₀₁	18.745(a)	16	0.282	Reject
H ₀₂	24.236(a)	16	0.084	Accept
H ₀₃	22.491(a)	16	0.128	Reject
H ₀₄	22.169(a)	16	0.138	Reject
H ₀₅	13.576(a)	16	0.63	Reject
H ₀₆	19.257(a)	16	0.256	Reject
H ₀₇	25.564(a)	16	0.06	Accept
H ₀₈	.137(a)	4	0.998	Reject
H ₀₉	1.600(a)	4	0.809	Reject
H ₁₀	12.094(a)	4	0.017	Accept
H ₁₁	25.202(a)	16	0.066	Reject
H ₁₂	35.948(a)	16	0.003	Accept
H ₁₃	15.971(a)	16	0.455	Reject
H ₁₄	18.352(a)	16	0.304	Reject
H ₁₅	17.744(a)	16	0.339	Reject
H ₁₆	26.265(a)	16	0.05	Accept
H ₁₇	21.983(a)	16	0.144	Reject
H ₁₈	26.163(a)	16	0.052	Reject
H ₁₉	5.876(a)	4	0.209	Reject
H ₂₀	16.362(a)	4	0.003	Accept
H ₂₁	10.981(a)	4	0.027	Accept

a few cells have expected count less than 5.

From the above table the hypothesis 2, 7, 10, 12, 16, 20 and 21 are accepted where as the other hypothesis are rejected that means there is no effect of the above hypothesis, where as the other variables have affect on specialization and carrier preferences of the female students.

Conclusion

The factors which affect the subject preferences i.e. specialization of females are **Ease and external influences** that means ease to understand the subject, and get good score and the views of the parents, peers and mentors. Here the parents and effortless learning are more important. **The Institute**, which includes the faculty and the availability of subject options are also important. The **Individual's benefit** which includes Interest and

job opportunities is the last factor which the females consider while choosing the subject.

The study also studies the Factors which affect the carrier preferences of females. The **External Influences** such as the family opinion, social and cultural influences, parents' financial situation, marriage plans and educational background are affecting the most. That means still the family affects the decision of the females while choosing a carrier. The company which offers the **Job i.e.**, salary, career growth, company brand and job security is also important but it is the next preference; Then the **interest** of an individual and the **work place and its environment**.

We have also found that there is no effect of family income, position of sibling and work experience on the choice of specialization. But the other variables has effect on it, these variables are father education father profession, mother education, mother profession, medium of education, graduation and preferred carrier has effect on the choice of specialization.

Similarly Family income, Mother Profession, graduation before MBA and work experience has no effect on the preferred carrier were as father education father profession, mother profession, medium of education, position of sibling has effect on preferred carrier.

The limitation of the study is the data which is collected from Management Institute of Indore, whose number is very few; Though Indore is also known as an education hub of the state Madhya Pradesh.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Part 1 Demographic Variable

Name (Optional): _____

College: _____

Family Income

- a) Less than 1 lac ____ b) 1-3 lac ____ c) 3-5lac ____
d) 5-10 lac ____ e) More than 10 lac ____

Father's Highest Education

- a) Less than 10th std. b) More than 10th std c) Graduation d) Post Graduation
e) Doctorate

Father's Profession

- a) Service (job) b) Professional (practicing lawyer, doctor etc) c) Business d) Retired e) None of the above (please mention) _____

Mother's highest education

- a) Less than 10th std. b) More than 10th std. c) Graduation d) Post Graduation e) Doctorate

Mother's Profession

- a) Service (job) b) Professional (practicing lawyer, doctor etc) c) Business d) Retired e) None of the above (please mention) OR housewife _____

Number of family member

- a) You and one parent/ one sibling/ one guardian b) You and both your parents
c) You, your parents and siblings (1-2 siblings) d) You, your parents and siblings (more than 2 siblings)
e) You live in a joint family

Your position among your siblings

- a)1st (you are the eldest) b)2nd (you have one elder to you) c)3rd (you have two elder to you) d)4th (you have three elder to you) e)5th(you have four elder to you)

Education

- English medium schooling before MBA
 Hindi medium schooling before MBA
 Graduation before MBA
 Post Graduation before MBA
 Work experience of more than 6 months before MBA
 No work experience

Specialization

- What is your subject of specialisation?
 a) Finance b) Marketing c)HR d) Other (HA, tourism, DM, ECom etc) e) You do not have specialisation

Preferred career?

- a) Office oriented b) You don't mind going into the field c) Academics d) Whatever opportunity you get e) Do not plan to work

Section 2

Please rate the following factors as per the degree to which it influences your subject preferences (please tick)

	Very Important	Important	OK	Not so important	Not at all Important
Your Interest					
Job opportunities					
Easy to understand					
Easy to score					
Opinion of parents/relatives					
Opinion of peers					
Availability of option					
Availabilty of faculty					
Influence of your mentor/ someone you admire					

Section 3

Please rate the following factors as per the degree to which it influences your career preferences

	Very Important	Important	OK	Not so important	Not at all Important
Salary					
Career growth					
The company's brand					
The work environment					
Job security					
Your family opinion					
The location of your work place					
Interest in your work					
Your educational background (your stream of graduation etc.)					
Social and cultural pressures					
Your parents' financial situation					
Marriage plans					

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