



An Analytical Study on the Influence of Parental and Student Preferences in Course Selection after 12th Standard

^{*1}Poorani Manikandan and ²Dr. S Maruthavijayan

^{*1}2nd Year Student of B.B.A, LLB(HONS), School of Excellence in Law, Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

²Assistant Professor, Department of Human Resource Management, School of Excellence in Law, Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

Abstract

The current research explores the interactions between parents' roles and students' own preferred course choices after the 12th grade. With a survey research design, information was gathered from students and their parents to determine the nature and extent of parent guidance, students' interests, and other external factors such as socioeconomic status. The findings indicated, while significant parental advising still existed, more students are making choices to support their own interests and future careers. Together, the results indicate the tensions between familial expectations and students' independence in higher education among varied demographic groups. This research has broader implications to educational practitioners in terms of promoting awareness and academic advising toward understanding the tension between parental guidance and their own hopes and aspirations in a more collaborative fashion, and promoting informal advocacy instead of parental direct intervention, in the decision-making process about course taking behavior.

Keywords: Parental influence, Student preferences, Course selection, Higher education, Career decision making, Parental guidance, Student autonomy, Academic choices, Socioeconomic factors, Educational counseling.

1. Introduction

The transition from 12th standard represents one of the most critical educational crossroads for students in India. The course of undergraduate study will shape future career options and reflects some interaction of influence from parents and students. The results of the survey that involved 80 student respondents indicate parental encouragement/input, parental approval, institutional career guidance, and awareness of job possibilities as significant factors informing students' final responses. Parents influence some students' decisions, but others exercise autonomy. Programmatic/designated opportunities for career guidance or other adult input can serve as facilitators to student decision-making.

Based on these types of context, the present study seeks to understand how students and their parents negotiate course options after 12th standard level. Specifically, this study seeks to understand the extent of parental involvement, consider the autonomy experienced by students, and how career guidance input, awareness of career opportunities, and parental input plays a role in student choice. The study also serves to establish patterns and identify areas of conflict with the goal of helping learners, families, educators and policymakers strengthen systems of support for students to make the best possible individual career decisions.

1.1. Background of the Study: Choosing a course following the 12th standard is not an easy thing to do and it usually considers several factors that greatly influence the student's decision in choosing a right course such as parental expectations, student's interests, academic background, and future opportunities. This occurs within the policies and context of the educational system in Indian schools where parental involvement means parents typically decide the academic pathway of the student. Your survey aims to provide insights into parental expectations and behaviors related to student's academic pathways based on approval rates, role in encouraging or discouraging the student, and level of clarity concerning parental expectations. Some other educators or providers (schools or educational institutions, etc.) can also influence the course selection both directly and indirectly, via career counseling sessions generally geared toward parental expectations, though these sessions are likely to vary greatly in terms of frequency and success.

1.2. Statement of the Problem: Although educational policies are shaping environments that espouse student-centered approaches, students are still experiencing significant parental involvement in their academic life

allowing for the lessening, if not removal, of any student preferences or intended career goals. For some students, the actions of parents can lead to disappointment, confusion, or considerations for changing the enrolled courses, which was echoed by a number of survey respondents who indicated they considered changing their courses after enrolling. The lack of consistency in schools having professional guidance for providing course information can further limit a student's capability to make informed and confident choices that may be more aligned with their strengths and future considerations.

1.3. Objectives of the Study: To measure how much involvement and support parents have in their children's college or university course selection after quite an experience. To measure how much independence is felt by students. To analyze the impact of career advising from the school system. To measure the impact of knowing the job market analyzing what students will choose. Research Questions How much power do parents have in choosing their child's pathway? What amount of power do students feel they have? How do students weigh parental factors versus academic or career related factors? Does career advising or the job market have an affect on final decision making? Significance of the Study This study offers valuable insight into parental support for students in the higher education selection process. The study pinpoints when and where advising supports can develop, and the resulting implications schools and families may use encouraging choices based on student interests and aspirations.

1.4. Scope and Limitations: This study includes 80 students from varying backgrounds and academic streams as a sample population. Although this data offers meaningful observations, the impact of the population size, and geographic suitability must be recognized when trying to develop or effect change based on the study. Future research may relate to the size and diversity of the population used as a sample.

2. Review of Literature

One of the most crucial choices a student will ever make is what to study after the 12th grade. Their future goals, career, and level of personal fulfilment are frequently shaped by this decision. Parents and students both have a significant influence on this choice, according to numerous studies. This process is guided by a number of significant factors, including the role of schools, the degree of freedom granted to students, the influence of parents, and future employment opportunities.

Parental Involvement the educational decisions of children have always been heavily influenced by their parents. They want their kids to enrol in classes that will prepare them for a safe and well-respected job. Traditional professions like engineering, medicine, or business are recommended by the majority of parents because they are thought to offer greater job security. Parental direction can be beneficial, but it can also restrict a child's freedom to pursue their own interests. However, in a lot of contemporary households, parents are starting to support their kids' personal decisions more.

Choices of the Students This study has revealed that a considerable number of students have taste of reading according to their own interest rather than by force from family members. What most of the respondents affirmed is that, after graduating from the 12th grade, they could, most

probably do so and answered accordingly. The data also suggests that students are doing a better job of understanding their skills and what they want to do with their careers. There were still some students who discussed their decisions with their parents prior to making.

Social and Economic Issues Many students often select their courses not only based on their interests but also on their social status, financial situation, and the availability of jobs after graduation. It is true that these students generally prefer classes that will lead to them securing decent jobs and earning stable incomes. Middle-class families are mostly engaged in supporting disciplines that will assist them in becoming financially strong later on. The perception of particular careers by the society also influences the students' decisions along with their parents who tend to pick "popular" courses instead of these that interest them personally.

3. Research Methodology

- i). **Research Design:** The study at hand used a descriptive survey design. The objectives of this study are to assess the role of parental focus and student's interest on his/her course selection after 12th std. The research aims to capture direct data from the students' side, in order to grasp a total view on the students and real situation, thoughts and behavior in their course selections.
- ii). **Population and Sample:** The study's population was made up of students who had finished their 12th grade and were now studying at a higher level. The total number of people who took part in this study was 100. The students were from different educational streams i.e. arts, science, and commerce. The sample is a combination of both male and female students from different schools and families, thus ensuring diversity and fairness in the responses obtained.
- iii). **Sampling Technique:** The method used for this research work is simple random sampling. This approach was applied in order to ensure an opportunity for each participant to have equal chance of participating in the study. The choice was made by random selection and without bias to have a good representation of the different types of students opinions.
- iv). **Data Collection Methods:** This research is largely dependant on primary data, which is collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was formed with multiple-choice questions and was dealing with parents' influence, an individual's interest, the freedom of decision-making, and the chosen course satisfaction. The responses were gathered from the participants and displayed via charts and diagrams as depicted in the analysis section. Briefly, some secondary data from articles and reports were used for the study.
- v). **Tools and Techniques Used for Analysis:** Percentage analysis was applied to the collected responses. The findings were depicted in the forms of bar charts and pie charts to illustrate how various factors such as parental guidance, subject interest, career opportunities and independence in choosing the course affected students' decisions. The study allowed identifying the share of students that were under the influence of parents and those that took their own decisions.

4. Data Analysis and Interpretation

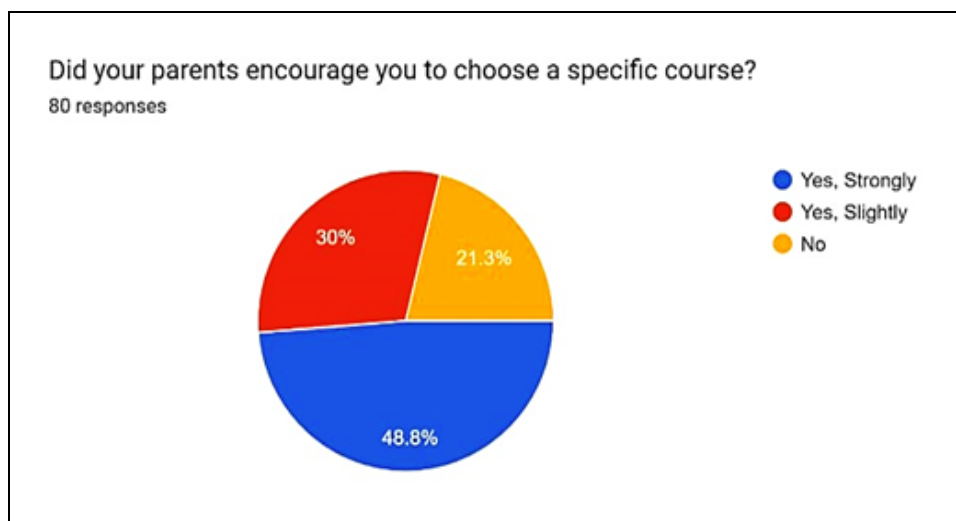
This chapter is the place where we lay out the analysis, and the interpretation, of the data gathered by the use of a structured questionnaire from 80 respondents. The primary

goal behind this research is to decipher how much influence the parents and how much preference the students have in deciding the courses after a completion of the 12th standard. In regards to the data, they have been analyzed employing the

percentage method and have been represented through numbers and pictures, in this case, pie charts

4.1. Analysis of Parental Influence

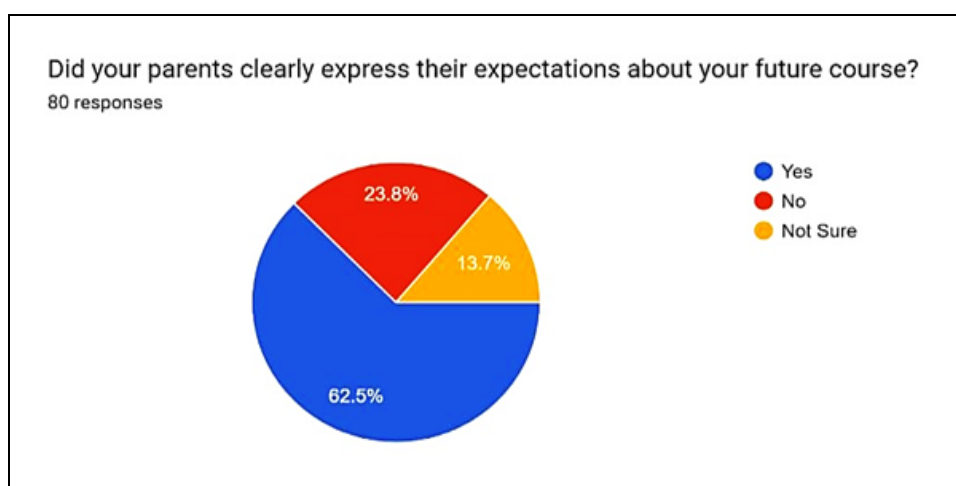
i).



Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes, strongly	39	48.8%
Yes, slightly	24	30%
No	17	21.3%
Total	80	100%

Almost 48.8% of the respondents revealed that their parents urged them to pick out a certain course. So, the role of parents is still very much influential in determining academic decisions students.

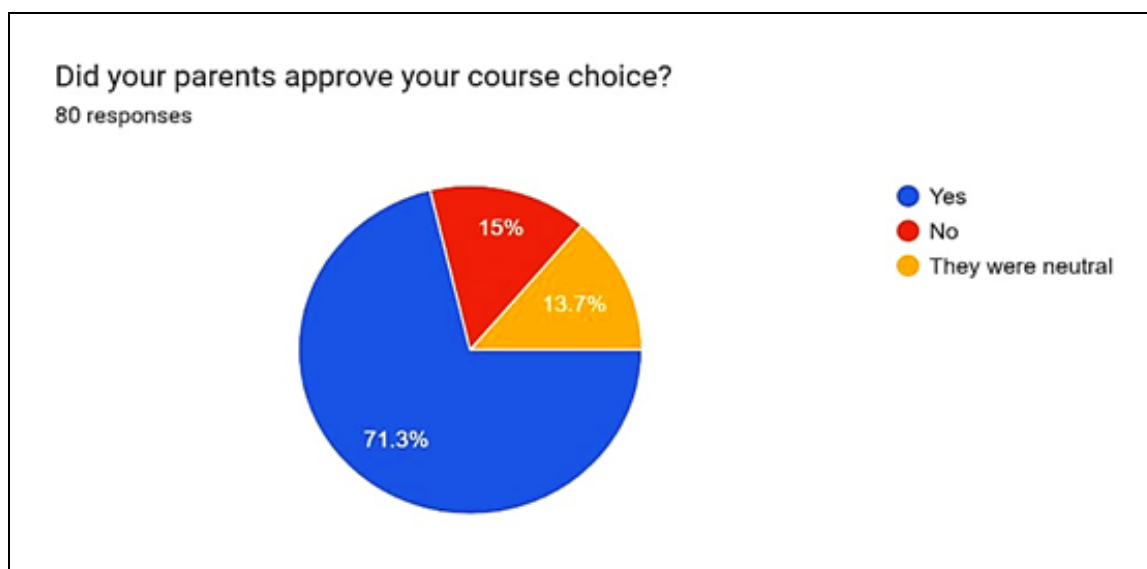
ii).



Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	50	62.5%
No	19	23.8%
Not sure	11	13.7%
Total	80	100%

More than half of the respondents, i.e., 62.5%, mentioned that their parents set expectations for their future course implying that parents are very much in the picture when it comes to planning and decision-making of the course.

iii).

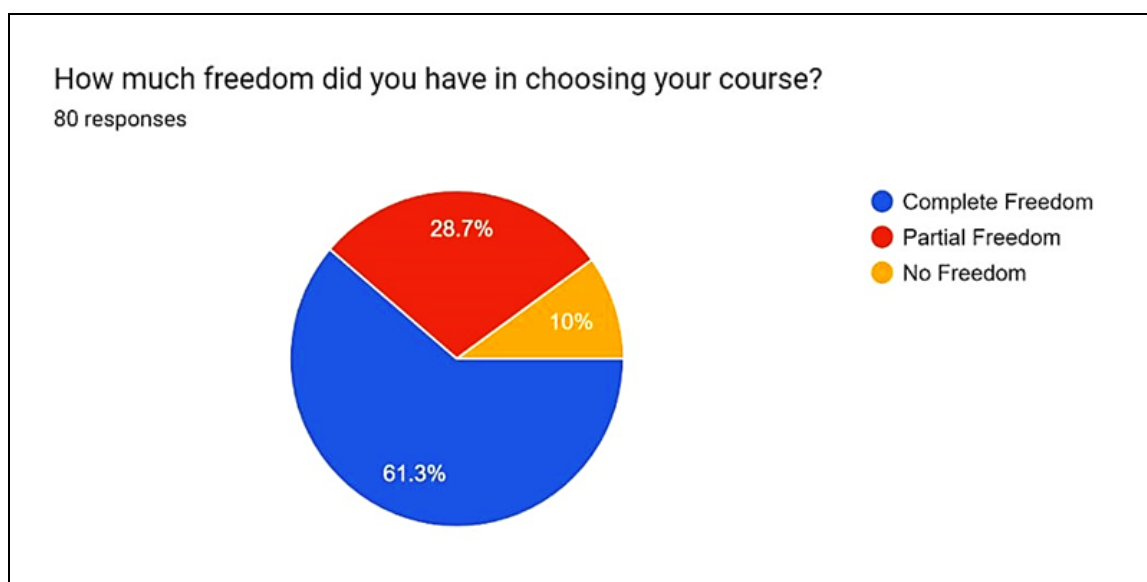


Response	No. of Respondent	Percentage
Yes	50	71.3%
No	19	15%
They were natural	11	13.7%
Total	80	100%

Thirty-five out of 50 respondents (71.3%) confirmed that their parents approved their course selection stating that strong family support and participation were among the decision-making process.

4.2. Analysis of Student Preferences

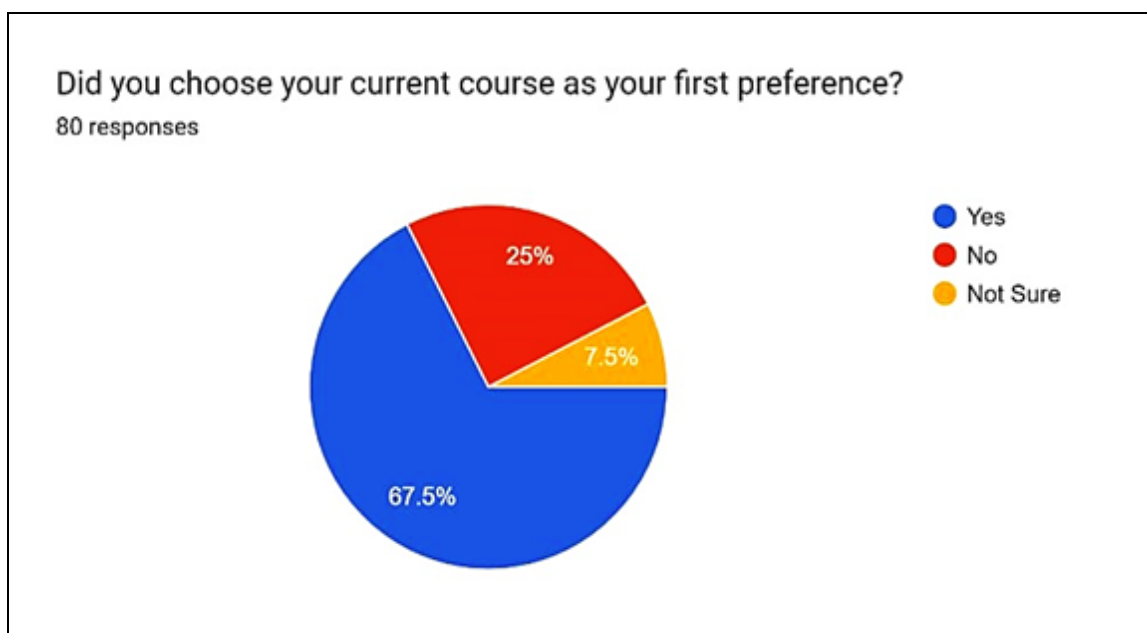
i).



Freedom Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Complete freedom	49	61.3%
Partial freedom	23	28.7%
No freedom	8	10%
Total	80	100%

The majority of students (61.3%) said that they had complete freedom to decide their course, and 10 percentage of students mentioned that there is no freedom, while 28.7% mentioned that they had partial freedom.

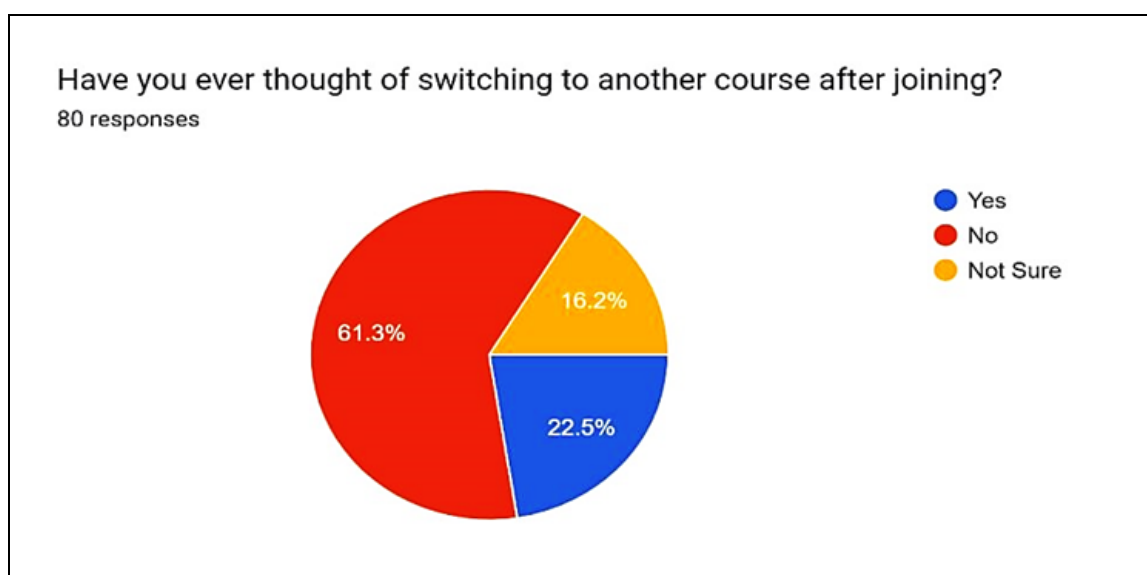
ii).



Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	54	67.5%
No	20	25%
Not sure	6	7.5%
Total	80	100%

Approximately 67.5% of the respondents indicated that their first choice was their present course. It is seen that most students are content with the stream they have chosen after 12th standard.

iii).

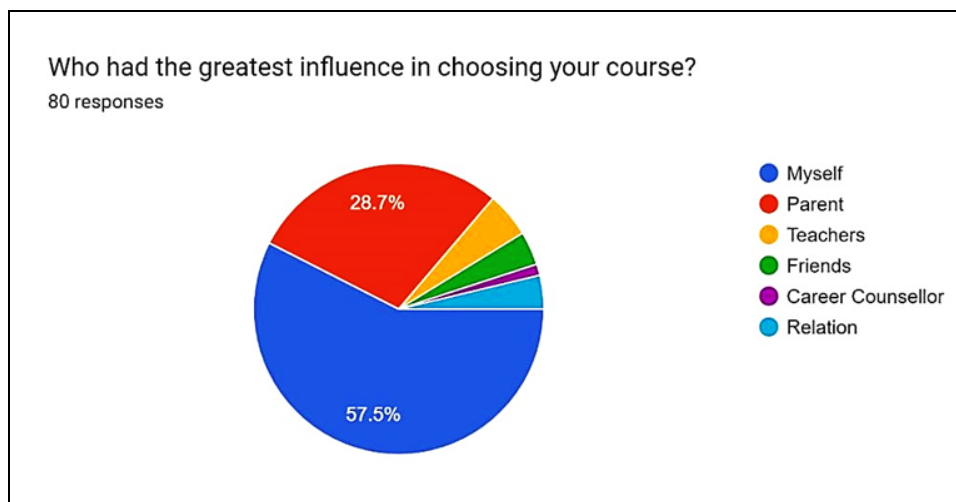


Response	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	18	22.5%
No	49	61.3%
Not sure	13	16.2%
Total	80	100%

Nearly 22.5% of the students reported that they have thought about changing their course, while 61.3% said they have not. Some students may have made their decisions too quickly or due to lack of proper counseling before the admission process as this statement indicates.

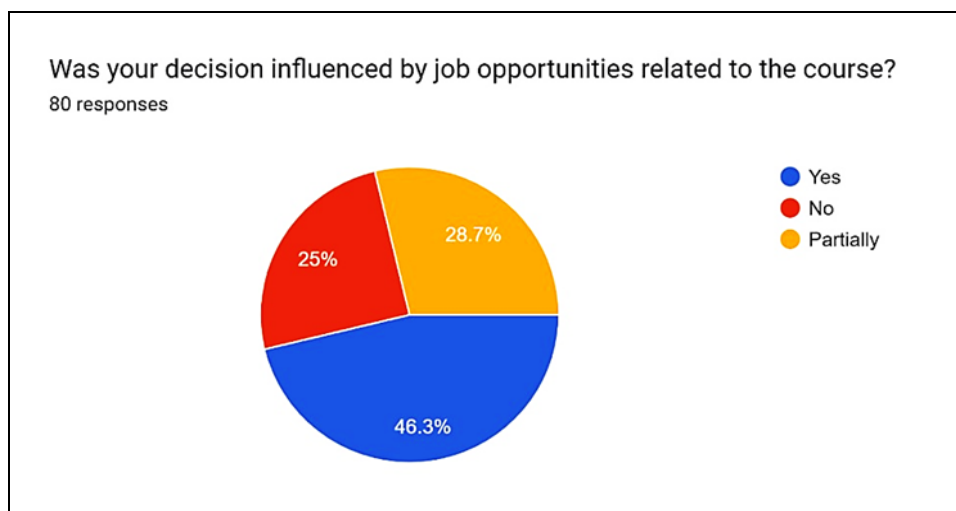
4.3. Comparative Analysis Between Parental and Student Choices

i).



According to the survey a majority of students indicated that their parents were the most influential figures in deciding their course while a few that their own interest was the key source. Both parents and students share the responsibility of making major decisions, but parents still seem to have a say in command.

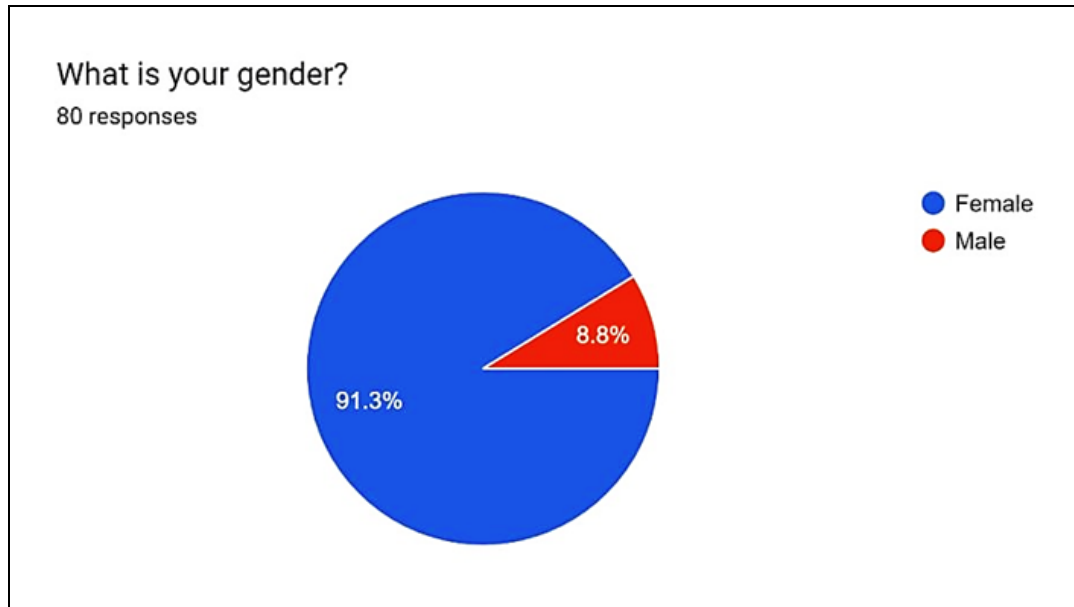
ii).



Around 46.3% of students felt that the availability of work was the reason for choosing their course while 28.8% considered it a partial influence. The finding reveals a considerable number of students who opt to study their desired courses with a thought of future job prospects.

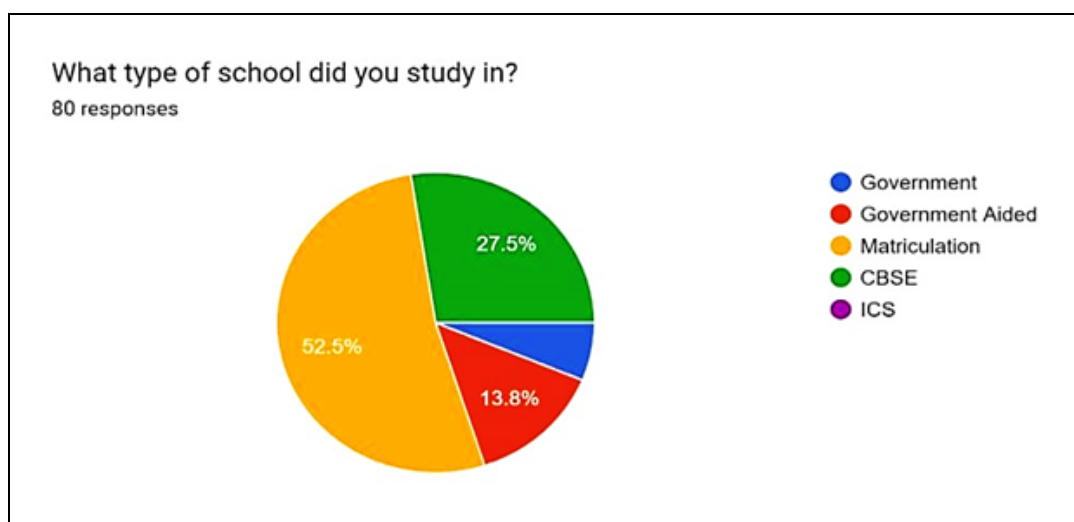
4.4. Statistical Interpretation and Findings

i).



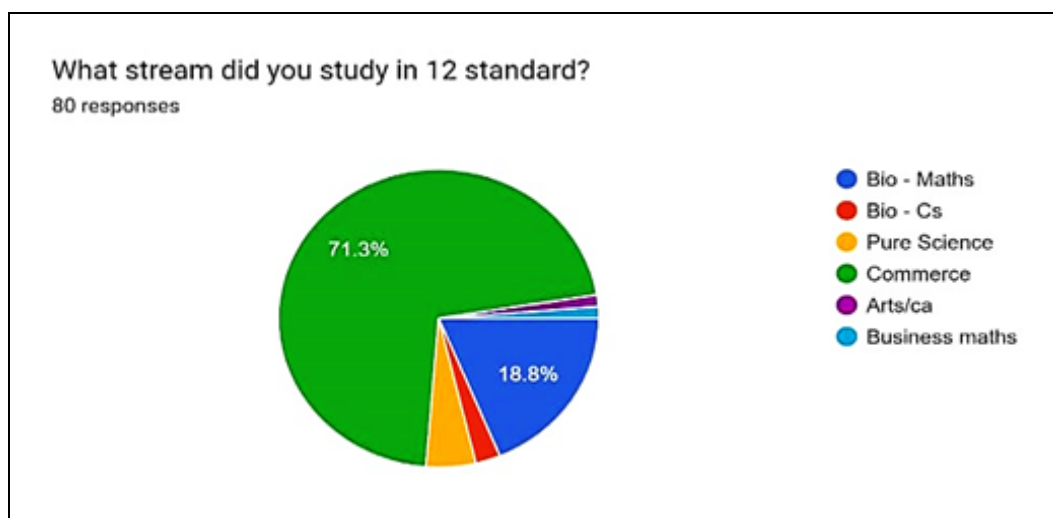
The survey results indicate that 73% of respondents were female, where as males constituted only 16.3%. Hence, the study was more supported by the participation of female students.

ii).



It was found that 66.3% of pupils attended either a private or an aided school, while only 6.2% went to the government schools. The information suggests that the majority of the sample was from the private sector.

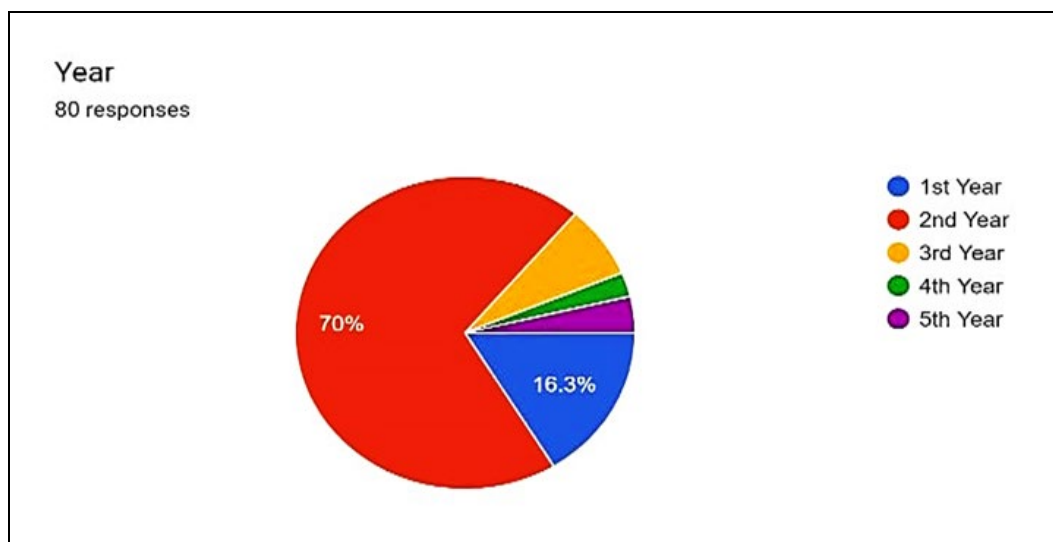
iii).



Stream	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Commerce	58	72.5%
Bio-maths	15	18.8%
Arts	1	1.2%
Bio-cs	2	2.5%
Pure science	4	5%
Total	80	100%

More than half of the students (72.5%) took the commerce stream, leading by a large margin the science and arts streams. As a result, commerce is recognized as a trend-setting option.

iv).



Year	No. of Respondents	Percentages
1 st Year	13	16.3%
2 nd Year	56	70%
3 rd Year	6	7.5%
4 th Year	2	2.5%
5 th Year	3	3.7%
Total	80	100%

The majority of respondents were first-year students (62.3%), while the number of second- and third-year students was lower. The implication is that most of the participants are at the beginning of their college journey.

5. Findings and Discussion:

5.1. Major Findings of the Study

The study lists the following major findings based on the 80 student responses analyzed:

- i). **Gender Distribution:** Most of the survey participants were females (approximately 81%), which indicates that girls were more reactive to the survey process.
- ii). **Courses Pursued:** The students were undergraduates with very different majors such as arts, commerce, science, and professional degrees. It unveils the different educational interests of students.
- iii). **Parental Influence:** Approximately 49% of students agreed that their parents were the ones that pushed them to go for a particular course, whereas 62.5% reported that their parents were the ones that set the expectations regarding their future studies. As much as 71% of the students stated that their parents endorsed their final decision.
- iv). **Freedom in Choice:** About 61% of the students claimed that they had total freedom in choosing a course, and only 29% reported that they had partial freedom. This indicates a positive transition from dependence to independence of students.
- v). **Course Preference:** The majority of the sample, i.e. 63%, said that they were studying courses of their own first choices, implying that most of them were content with it.
- vi). **Influence Factors:** 46% of the students acknowledged that they decided to study the subject mainly because of the availability of the job afterwards. On the contrary, some students selected the course based on their liking or on the advice of their parents.
- vii). **Career Guidance:** Career guidance was given in 55% of the schools in question, and the sessions were held before the 12th Duke's exam result. However, as many as 31% of students told that no such sessions were available for them.
- viii). **Course Satisfaction:** Students changing their majors after enrollment only accounted for approximately 22%. Hence, a minor proportion of students who had experienced alleged dissatisfaction or incongruence is implied from the figure.

5.2. Discussion of the Results

The study's findings indicate a positive trend in parental and student engagement in post-12th course selection. Most students reported parental guidance or support during the decision phase; however, many also claimed they had some or complete freedom to choose their course. This suggests a move towards a balanced relationship where parental advice is supplemented by student autonomy.

The survey charts also indicate that the availability of work and career advancement were decisive factors for the final choice. Several students confessed that although interest was a determining factor, they also assessed the future employment prospects before making their final decision.

Moreover, it was observed that only one-fifth of the students thought about changing the course after getting admitted. This means that either these students did not know the content of the course or they were not properly guided before they made their choice. Besides these, just a little more than 50% of the respondents were provided with career guidance at school, which is proof that counseling programs need to be put in place.

In general, the findings affirm that the decision-making

process shared between parents and students, yet enhanced knowledge and professional guidance could lead to greater confidence and satisfaction in course selection among all students.

6. Suggestions and Recommendation:

On the basis of the data collected from the survey and results gleaned from this study, the authors have an array of feasible suggestions.

- i). **Improve Career Guidance in Schools:** As only about half the students could access career guidance before their 12th results, schools need to initiate such counseling sessions on a regular basis. They would serve to clarify the courses available and indicate the job opportunities that could be related to them.
- ii). **Encourage Joint Decision-Making:** Parents and students must discuss openly course options. Involving parents in the decision will give the child the necessary support that a parental perspective and advice would be taken into account at the same time.
- iii). **Increase Awareness about Emerging Careers:** The research reveals that majority of students still opt for traditional streams. Hence, schools and colleges must organize the seminars and conduct workshops to introduce the new and creative fields such as data analytics, design, media, and psychology.
- iv). **Promote Student Autonomy:** Notably, most of the respondents claimed that they were provided with the opportunity of individual selection. The authors of this paper suggest that taking such a step further, it would be possible to let students choose the courses that fit their skills, interests, and long-term goals.
- v). **Provide Post-Admission Counseling:** As some students planned to switch courses after joining, the colleges should offer mentorship and follow-up sessions during the first semester to help them acclimatize or facilitate their decision-making process if they have to adjust.

7. Conclusion

The current research finds that an impact of parental behaviors and students' preference not only decides which subject students will study after 12th but is the most decisive factor as well. The results of the survey point out that many students still consider parental guidance as valuable, however, there is a noticeable trend towards autonomy where youngsters increasingly recognize their interests, abilities, and career ambitions to be of paramount importance in decision-making.

The majority of participants consented with the statement that their families being not only supportive but also in agreement with their decisions is an important aspect, which indicates that the role of family in educational decisions is still dominant. Nevertheless, most students also claimed that they had full or partial independence, which confirmed that parents were more ready to accept their kids' points of view. Thus, it represents an encouraging cultural change from the domination of parents to the teamwork concept in decision-making.

The data also indicate that aspects related to future employment and career prospects have become significant factors in students' decision to choose one field over another. The students reveal that they want to have a career and know that it is necessary to select areas that offer growth and stability. In that regard, the fact that some students considered

changing their majors can be interpreted as a sign of career awareness and the need for improvement of pre-admission counseling still existing.

It is the obligation of schools and colleges as well to become part of this scenario. Since only a little over half of the respondents had career advice before admission, institutions should strive to implement systematic programs to assist students in making informed choices.

In the end, the study provides the insight that the best outcomes result from an equilibrium between parental influence and student autonomy. Children will really flourish when parents are supportive of their dreams and schools take on the responsibility of counseling. Consequently, students are more apt to select the programs that best suit their talents, inclinations as well as future aspirations thus acquiring both academic success and professional progress.

References

1. S. Agarwal and P. Sharma. Parental influence on students & apos; educational choices: A study of post-secondary decision-making in India & apos; in the & apos; *International Journal of Education and Social Science & apos.* 2022; 9(4):45-53.
2. In R. Kumar and L. Devi co-wrote an article "Factors affecting course selection among higher secondary students" published in the "*Journal of Educational Psychology and Research*". 2021; 8(2):78-86.
3. M. Singh and R. Thomas. "Role of parents and teachers in guiding students for career choice". "*Indian Journal of Educational Studies*".2020; 5(3):32-40.
4. Mehta and L. George. "Students & apos; preferences and parental pressure in higher education decision-making" in "*Asian Journal of Education and Development*". 2019; 7(1):55-63.
5. National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). (2018). Guidance and counseling in schools: A handbook for teachers. New Delhi: NCERT Publications.
6. K. Chauhan and R. Patel. Socio-economic background influence on course selection after 12th standard. *International Journal of Social and Behavioural Sciences*. 2020; 6(2):91-98.
7. Brown D & Lent RW. Career development and counseling: Putting theory and research to work. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2018.