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Choosing the Path: Exploring the Factors behinds Career Selection Process of Business Management Students in India

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important decisions a student will ever make is choosing a career. Before making this decision, they must consider a number of factors. The goal of this study is to determine the factors that affect the decision to pursue a profession in the field of business management. In order to perform this research, prior literature was thoroughly examined, leading to the identification of 15 factors and the finalization of a questionnaire. The findings of the study suggests that there are no significant differences between male and female students when it comes to selecting business management as a career. The fifteen factors were grouped together under four constructs: financial, social, personal, and other factors. According to correlation analysis, all four of the constructs have positive relationship with each other. Last but not least, this study introduces a fresh perspective on the variables influencing students' decision to seek post-graduation in management (MBA) and go on to become managers.

Keywords: *Management Education, Career Choice, Determinants of Career Choice, Career Decision, Business Management, MBA, India*

I. INTRODUCTION

As the world's population ages, India has an abundance of youthful talent and is poised to become a worldwide hub for human capital, contributing significantly to the workforce in the coming decade. It is now critical for India to capitalize on the demographic dividend and generate employability for the fresh talent. According to the Wheebox India Skills Report (2023), the most demand courses in 2023 are B. Com and MBA with employability of 60.62% and 60.1% respectively. Another survey by All India Survey on Higher Education (2017-18) stated the total enrollment of management students was 5.97 lakhs with 2.27 lakh being female. Thus, Indian economy has a surplus of labor supply, with a large number of students graduating every year and entering the labor market. The students typically expect that after obtaining MBA degree they would be ready for work and will have great professional

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opportunities in the corporate sector (Kramarz and Skans, 2014; Liagouras et al., 2003; Liu-Farrer and Shire, 2021; Tomlinson, 2008).

Students go through times of transition from one situation to another, such as from senior secondary school to college, latter to university, and then into the state of profession. These stages of transition are critical events, which have influence on an individual's personal and social personality. These transitions are influenced by several factors such as gender, personal experiences, and social interaction. From adolescence to adult, identity becomes independent and a major factor in deciding a career choice. The formation of identity in the process of becoming a young adult and the mechanisms of reaching a professional maturity bring adults to discover themselves, their skills and interests, and to make adequate academic and career decision. The decision-making process of selecting a career is complex and dynamic in an individual's life, and choosing a right career is key to develop a good professional identity (Alika 2010a, 2010b; Blustein et al., 2004).

Studies reveal that attitudes and gender disparity are significant factors in deciding a career among male and female (Ahuja et al., 2006). Some studies supported the need to interpret gender stereotypes that guide the educational–professional choice of students (Edokpolor and Enokeran et al., 2019; Hadjar, 2015). Researches has also revealed that student's express consistency in professional interests with stereotypical patterns, for instance males prefer occupations such as military professions, while females prefer teaching and nursing. Male prefer realistic professions which are considered masculine while social and artistic occupations are considered feminine (Ji et al., 2004). Rather, globalization has changed the working pattern of corporate with males and females playing equal part in the organization. This has brought transformation in organizations to remain competitive and hire irrespective of gender. Owing to intense market competition, human resources are essential to any organization's success. While managerial skills are becoming increasingly important for businesses in the current fast-paced economic climate. In a market where competition is fierce, the ability to make decisions and manage people are critical to success. As a result, there is an increasing need for managerial professionals everywhere in the world. According to Sturges et al. (2003), the Master of Business Administration (MBA) gives students a competitive advantage over other professions by imparting certain critical skills and playing a major role in the career of management students.

There are a lot of factors that could influence a person's career choice, such as their expectations for the future, their family background, their personal and cultural beliefs, and so on. A number of research in various cultural contexts have been conducted to determine the

factors influencing students' decisions about their careers (Kyriacou et al., 2002; O'zbilgin et al., 2005; Ozkale et al., 2004). However, it was noted from the literature that not many researches have been conducted to explore the variables influencing management students' career choices. This demonstrates the paucity of study on the factors influencing career choice of business management students in India (Agarwala, 2008). The main goal of this study is to investigate the factors that affect students' decisions to pursue master's degrees in business management. Additionally, research attempts to group the variables into a construct and develop it as a variable for later investigations. Finally, a demographic analysis was also performed to examine any gender disparities based on these variables.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A three-dimensional framework made up of intrinsic, extrinsic, and interpersonal factors that affect students' career decision-making was established by Carpenter and Foster (1977) and Beyon et al. (1998). Personal interests, job preferences, and work choices are considered intrinsic. Financial rewards from jobs, employment possibilities, and career advancement are considered extrinsic. Finally, interpersonal factors include parental role, family influence, and significant others. According to Ozbilgin et al. (2005), there are cultural and regional differences in the factors that affect students' career decisions. According to Bai (1998), when students choose a career, their own interests come first and societal interests come second. The study also showed that economic conditions have transformed the ideals of students such as financial rewards and authority have emerging as key motivators. Literature also shows that youths professional decisions are influenced by the social, cultural, and financial environments.

Oloasebikan and Olusakin (2014) defines career as the steps and measures taken for progress by an individual throughout a lifetime, specifically in relation to the individual's profession. The term "career" in this context refers to "any kind of professional involvement that students pursue in relation to their higher studies." According to Webster's Dictionary, "decision" means "a choice that you make about something after thinking about it". "Career decision" means selecting one career over the other in terms of higher studies and profession. Therefore, to have a "career decision" there should be: availability of different options as a career; and an individual choice between these career opportunities (O'zbilgin et al., 2005). While deciding for higher education, it depends on how many possibilities are accessible to a person at that particular moment. Decision of choosing a career is also influenced by personal factors (education, family background, attitudes, etc.) along with extrinsic factors (labor market, state

of the economy, etc.). According to Swanson and Gore (2000) career decision is not rampant rather choice of career which is influenced by various factors such as socio-cultural factors, personal and cultural values, and individual factors. O'zbilgin et al., (2005) highlighted that many studies related to career decision has emphasized on foreseeing career decision based on demographic or personality variables. Other studies have attempted to identify factors influencing career decision focusing mainly on persons' interest, overall opportunities, progress, aptitudes, etc. (Abbasi and Sarwat, 2014; Edokpolor and Enokeran, 2019; Felton et al., 1994).

Choosing a career is one of the most crucial decisions in a life of student because it is a tough process of selecting a career out of different available alternatives. Bandura et al. (2001) highlighted that persons' skills, talent, environment, academic achievement are the factors that influences career decision of students. Research has also indicated that students career decision is influenced by their social environment, school, and home (place of residence). Males' career decisions are more influenced by financial possibilities because they are typically the breadwinners in family, whereas females career decisions are more influenced by social values (Sax, 1994). According to Ferry et al. (2000), a student's decision about a career is greatly influenced by their personal circumstances as well as their academic performance. Educational level of father and mother, parent's profession and their income also affect decision of opting a career (Hearn 1984, 1988). Interest in course or profession is key factor while deciding a particular profession in decision making. For instance, if a student has got into career by chance or luck, they may show low interest and will result into a lower productivity followed by non-performance. Also, Suutari (2003) pointed out that studies have shown a significant relationship between area of interest and career decision. The decision of choosing management as profession by MBA students and the factors influencing their decision to go for professional management course have rarely been studied.

Sukovieff (1991) focused on socio-economic factors which are important in motivating students to make career decisions. According to Bandura et al. (2001), highlighted that individual perceive different values associated with different courses as career option and these values originates from social, personal, economic factors such as educational background, financial outcome in job and the environment. Further, stated that choosing a career is a world-wide problem among students irrespective of their genders. Similarly, Issa and Nwalo (2008) detailed that career choices which comprises of opting for electives, specializations and subsequent careers are equally stressful for both male and females. Students choose their electives depending on a variety of factors, including their interests, educational background,

and social surroundings. Gender, according to Feldman (2009), is the state of being male or female based on biological differences as well as social or cultural differences. According to Jamabo et al. (2012), gender refers to the biological distinctions that separate males and females from one another. Prior studies have demonstrated that gender is a significant factor in career decision-making (Fisher and Padmawidjaja, 1999; Ahuja et al. 2006; Abbasi and Sarwat, 2014; Morales et al., 2016; Mwamwenda, 2013; Mudhovozi and Chireshe, 2012; Ehigbor and Akinlosotu, 2016; Egunjobi et al., 2014; Durosaro and Adebanye, 2012; Igbinedion, 2011; Simiyu, 2015; Migunde et al., 2012; Mutekwe et al., 2011). Some researches revealed that career is not significantly influenced gender (Ojeda and Flores, 2008; Gati and Saka, 2001; Malubay et al., 2015; Uka, 2015). Similarly, other studies also reported no significant difference among boys and girls in terms of career choice (Ottu and Nkenchor, 2010; Migunde et al., 2012). Therefore, this paper will also consider the term gender in biological terms of male and female.

Agarwala (2008) explored the impact of a variety of factors on the career decision of management students in India. The most crucial elements determining Indian management students' career choices was their skills, competencies, and capacities. Bani-Khaled (2014) pointed that the process of choosing career is different among male and females and both the lay great stress on occupation status. Males prefer occupation that are investigative and high earnings such as operations, IT, sales and finance. While females opt for career that are of social type such as a human resource, digital marketing and accounting. A study by Mudhovozi and Chireshe, (2012) investigated the effect of socio-demographic characteristics on career decision of students in psychology discipline. Findings suggested that parents, friends and teachers are the primary influences the career choice of students in psychology discipline. Egunjobi et al. (2014) investigated the career options available to students as part of their academic endeavors. They discovered that undergraduates were persuaded to study LIS based on their interest. Amoor and Aliyu (2014) analyzed the factors that play a vital role in deciding secretarial profession as a career among business education students in Nigerian universities. Results of the study indicated that secretarial profession is still seem as feministic and attracts low status among men when compared to other occupations.

Wiswall and Zafar (2015) empirically investigated the drivers of college's major choice. The result highlighted that predicted incomes and perceived competence are important factors of major choice, varied perceptions are the most important factor in choice. The study by Damilola et al. (2018) looks into the factors that influence library and information science students' career choices at Federal Polytechnic Ede in Osun State. The findings of the research

indicated that 78(70.9%) students were impacted by their personal interest in the course, followed by 77(70%) students influenced by desire for knowledge, and 60(54.5%) career expectations. Edokpolor and Enokeran, (2019) primarily investigated the factors that influence students' perceptions of career options in business education. The study discovered the different factors that influence students' perceptions of career choices in business education. Kanyika (2022) studied the factors that influence students to choose career profession in Tanzania. As per the results of the study, work prospects and personal interest were the most significant factors in choosing the career. Jamim et al. (2022) investigated the impact of socioeconomic status on choice of career of students. Findings suggested that parents' education and occupation have a significant positive influence on career choice of student. Furthermore, it was discovered that parents have a significant impact on students' career decision making. There was no evidence that gender differences negatively affected career choice.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

A. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to identify the determinants that impact students' choices regarding the pursuit of an MBA as their master degree. The study sought to answer the following questions: firstly, what are the factors that influences student's career decision making. Secondly, highlights the key factors and transform them into constructs/variables that influence students career choice in management domain. And lastly, the study analyzes the gender differences among students comparatively.

Only few studies in this area have been conducted (Simmering and Wilcox, 1995; Moy and Lee, 2002; Sturges et al., 2003; O'zbilgin et al., 2005; Malach-Pines and Baruch, 2007). There are very few studies related to the career choice of students especially in management stream in regard to Indian context (Agarwala, 2008). Though, this undermined area is worth exploring for researchers to understand influence of different factors for choosing a career in management profession.

B. Questionnaire Development and Measures:

For this study the determinants that effect career choice of students was adapted from Agarwala, (2008) and O'zbilgin et al. (2005). Questionnaire was adapted in order to gather data from sample of students on five-point established Likert scale. Two sections were included in the questionnaire, the initial section of the questionnaire pertained to the demographic information of the participants, while the subsequent section comprised inquiries concerning

the factors that influence career choice of students while choosing any postgraduate program. Using a five-point Likert scale, the questionnaire was constructed on a scale beginning from 1= Not important; 2= Slight important; 3= Moderate important; 4= Important; 5= Very Important.

C. Sample Characteristics and Data Collection:

This study consisted of population of students who were in the first year of their MBA program in different private universities and colleges of Delhi NCR. Total 225 responses were received out of which 216 responses were found suitable after preliminary screening by excluding missing data and outliers. For this study, data was collected only from students belonging to India. Out of the sample of 216, 61.1% (n = 132) were males and 38.9 percent (n = 84) were females. The sample of students was between 20-30 years of age. It was discovered that none of the responders was married. Regarding the father's profession 50.9 percent (n = 110) of respondents belong to business or self-employed category while 49.1 percent (n = 106) respondents' father are employed in service. From the data it could be observed that 84.2% respondents belong to the family where mother is housemaker (n = 182), 13% (n = 28) of respondents' mother are employed in service and only 2.8 percent (n = 6) of respondents' mother were self-employed. The table I below shows the descriptive statistics of the collected data.

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Gender			
Male	132	61.1	61.1
Females	84	38.9	100
	216	100	100
Father's Occupation			
Self Employed / Business	110	50.9	50.9
Service	106	49.1	100
	216	100	100
Mother's Occupation			
Homemaker	182	84.2	84.2
Service	28	13	97.2
Self Employed	6	2.8	100
Total	216	100	100

(Table I: Demographics of sample (Source: Authors')

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Firstly, the mean and standard deviation of male and female students were analyzed to conduct a descriptive analysis of the factors influencing the career choice of management students. As well overall mean and standard deviations of all the respondents were also calculated.

		Males		Females		Total	
		N = 132		N = 84		N = 216	
S.no	Factors influencing career decision	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1.	My abilities	4.32	0.53	4.19	0.77	4.27	0.63
2.	Interest in the subject	4.24	0.63	4.18	0.70	4.22	0.66
3.	My education	3.90	0.89	4.14	0.89	4.00	0.90
4.	Financial rewards in this career	3.93	0.94	3.90	0.87	3.91	0.91
5.	Free choice in making my career decisions	4.10	0.97	4.16	0.85	4.12	0.92
6.	Quality of life associated	4.00	0.93	4.00	0.91	4.00	0.91
7.	Promotion opportunities	4.12	0.71	4.00	0.69	4.06	0.71
8.	My likeliness to this career	3.96	0.95	3.95	0.93	3.97	0.93
9.	Success stories of friends, family	3.47	1.16	3.33	0.97	3.41	1.08
10.	My knowledge of the labor market	3.32	1.03	3.21	0.84	3.25	0.97
11.	My financial/economic condition	3.58	1.13	3.73	0.88	3.62	1.06
12.	Ease of access to this career	3.44	0.86	3.33	0.92	3.37	0.91
13.	Chance, luck or circumstances	2.96	1.24	3.14	1.31	3.03	1.26
14.	Lack of access to other career options	2.64	1.15	2.76	1.16	2.69	1.14
15.	Placement and package	4.23	0.61	3.85	0.76	4.01	0.71

Table II: Descriptive statistics of Respondents (Source: Authors')

Gender wise analysis in Table II displays that both male and female students rated their

“abilities” as the most significant factor followed by “interest in the subject”. Male students rated “placement and package” as third important factor while female students rated “free choice in making career decision”. "Lack of access to other career options" was shown to be the least important factor impacting students' career decisions both generally and gender-wise. The choice of career among management students was less influenced by variables like "chance, luck or circumstances," "knowledge of labor market," "ease of access to this career," and "success stories of friends, family."

Additionally, the internal consistency of the data was checked using Cronbach alpha to evaluate the scale's reliability. All of the constructs had acceptable values that were nearly equal to or higher than 0.7 (Cronbach, 1972). The scale measured the factors influencing a students' career choice had an overall reliability of 0.847. The reliability analysis findings are displayed in the table below.

Factors	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Personal Factors	4	.771
Financial Factors	4	.692
Social Factor	4	.760
Other Factors	3	.726
Overall Reliability	15	.847

Table III: Reliability Analysis (Source: Authors')

Table IV shows the result of Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin value is 0.881 indicating the appropriateness of for factor analysis. The TVE is extracted in table V to check the variance in initial solution. In the original solution, the eigenvalues of only four elements are bigger than 1. When taken as a whole, the four components explain 66% of the variability as shown in Table V.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.801
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	273.872
	Df	91

Sig.	.000
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Table IV: KMO Test (Source: Authors')

TOTAL VARIANCE EXPLAINED (TVE)

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.096	36.399	36.399	5.096	36.399	36.399	2.602	18.589	18.589
2	1.551	11.082	47.481	1.551	11.082	47.481	2.350	16.787	35.376
3	1.511	10.793	58.273	1.511	10.793	58.273	2.212	15.797	51.173
4	1.082	7.730	66.003	1.082	7.730	66.003	2.076	14.829	66.003
5	.913	6.521	72.523						
6	.721	5.149	77.673						
7	.647	4.624	82.296						
8	.512	3.659	85.955						
9	.490	3.503	89.458						
10	.381	2.724	92.182						
11	.370	2.641	94.822						
12	.312	2.229	97.051						
13	.258	1.842	98.893						
14	.155	1.107	100.000						

Table V: Total Variance Explained (Source: Authors')

Moreover, an exploratory factor analysis was performed on all the factors which influence career choice of management students (O'Connor and Kinnane, 1961). All the factor loading

were found to be greater than 0.4 and converged into the four constructs that were named as personal factor, financial factor, social factor and others factors. The result of factor analysis is presented below in table VI.

	Rotated Component Matrix				
Construct	Factors	Components			
		1	2	3	4
Personal Factor	Abilities	.757			
	Interest in the subject	.710			
	Education	.678			
	Likelihood of the discipline	.631			
Financial Factor	Placement and package		.775		
	Economic/financial condition		.768		
	Financial Rewards in this career		.763		
	Financial Knowledge of the labor market		.614		
Social Factor	Free Choice in making my career decisions			.771	
	Success stories			.727	
	Quality of Life Associated			.689	
	More Promotion Opportunities			.529	
Other Factor	Chance, luck or circumstances				.823
	Lack of access to other career options				.822
	Ease of Access to this career				.571
	Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				
	a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.				

Table VI: Factor Analysis (Source: Authors')

Subsequently, a correlation analysis was conducted to examine the association between constructs that emerged from the factor analysis. The following hypothesis for the analysis were tested using correlation analysis.

H1: Personal factors exhibit a significant and positive correlation with financial factors, social factors, and other factors.

H2: Financial factors exhibit a significant and positive correlation with social factors, and other factors.

H3: Social factors exhibit a significant and positive correlation with other factors.

Correlations					
		PF	FF	SF	OF
Personal Factor (PF)	Pearson Correlation	1	.638**	.699**	.485**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	216	216	216	216
Financial Factor (FF)	Pearson Correlation	.638**	1	.646**	.415**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.003
	N	216	216	216	216
Social Factor (SF)	Pearson Correlation	.699**	.646**	1	.427**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.002
	N	216	216	216	216
Other Factors (OF)	Pearson Correlation	.485**	.415**	.427**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.003	.002	
	N	216	216	216	216
Other Factors	Pearson Correlation	.485**	.415**	.427**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.003	.002	

(OF)	N	216	216	216	216
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Table VI- Correlation Analysis (Significant at the 0.01 level** and at the 0.05 level*)

Based on the correlation analysis findings presented in Table VI, it is evident that personal factors exhibit a statistically significant positive correlation with financial factors ($r = 0.638$, $p = .000$); social factors ($r = 0.699$, $p = .000$); and other factors ($r = .485$, $p = .000$). In the same way, there was a significant positive correlation ($r = .646$, $p = .000$) between financial factors and social factors ($r = .415$, $p = .003$). Lastly, the social factor exhibited a statistically significant and positive correlation with the other factors ($r = .427$, $p = .002$). The results are in line with previous studies (Akoglu, 2018).

Comparative Gender Analysis:

Furthermore, fifteen null hypotheses were formulated on the basis of the group means of male and female students in order to examine the difference in viewpoints of male and female students regarding the factors influencing career choice. T-test was used to determine whether there was a significant difference in gender across all the factors analyzed in the study.

H04: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to their abilities. H05: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to their interest in the subject. H06: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to their educational background.

H07: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to their financial rewards associated with this career.

H08: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to their free choice in making my career decisions.

H09: No significant difference the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to their standard of life associated with this career.

H010: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to the promotional opportunities associated with this career.

H011: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to the likeness of this career.

H012: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to the success stories of friends, family.

H013: No significant difference the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to knowledge of the industry (in terms of employment/labor market).

H014: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to my financial/economic condition.

H015: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to ease of access to this career.

H016: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups to chance, luck or circumstances.

H017: No significant difference between the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to lack of access to other career options.

H018: No significant difference the sample means of two groups vis-à-vis to placement and package.

Table VII: Comparative Analysis using t-test

		Males		Females		Total		t-test	Accepted/ Rejected
		N = 132		N = 84		N = 216			
H0	Factors influencing career decision	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Sig.	Decision
H04	My abilities	4.32	0.53	4.19	0.77	4.27	0.63	0.16	Accepted
H05	Interest in the subject	4.24	0.63	4.19	0.70	4.22	0.66	0.29	Accepted
H06	My education	3.90	0.89	4.14	0.89	4.00	0.90	0.33	Accepted
H07	Financial rewards in this career	3.93	0.94	3.90	0.87	3.91	0.91	0.37	Accepted
H08	Free choice in making my career decisions	4.10	0.97	4.16	0.85	4.12	0.92	0.34	Accepted
H09	Quality of life associated	4.00	0.93	4.00	0.91	4.00	0.91	0.82	Accepted
H010	Promotion opportunities	4.12	0.71	4.00	0.69	4.06	0.71	0.90	Accepted

H011	My likeliness to this career	3.96	0.95	3.95	0.93	3.97	0.93	0.57	Accepted
H012	Success stories of friends, family	3.47	1.16	3.33	0.97	3.41	1.08	0.92	Accepted
H013	My knowledge of the labor market	3.32	1.03	3.21	0.84	3.25	0.97	0.56	Accepted
H014	My financial/economic condition	3.58	1.13	3.73	0.88	3.62	1.06	0.91	Accepted
H015	Ease of access to this career	3.44	0.86	3.33	0.92	3.37	0.91	0.63	Accepted
H016	Chance, luck or circumstances	2.96	1.24	3.14	1.31	3.03	1.26	0.65	Accepted
H017	Lack of access to other career options	2.64	1.15	2.76	1.16	2.69	1.14	0.28	Accepted
H018	Placement and package	4.23	0.61	3.85	0.76	4.01	0.71	0.19	Accepted

Based on the t-test results presented in Table VII, it can be inferred that there were no statistically significant differences between male and female students in terms of the factors that influence their career choice. The findings of the study are consistent with the existing literature (Ojeda and Flores, 2008; Malubay et. al., 2015; Uka, 2015; Ottu and Nkenchor, 2010; Migunde et al., 2012). Hence, the earlier result demonstrates that the abilities and interest of both male and female students are the most significant factors in determining their performance in the topic. This finding highlight that students take admission in MBA program because of their intrinsic abilities (abilities, interest) and strength and can be a high performer in future.

V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The research has identified the factors that impact students' career decisions while opting MBA as their professional degree. As evident from result, students considered their own “abilities” and “interest in the subject” as the utmost important factor for choosing a career in management profession. The results of the research are similar to the previous studies lead by Agarwala (2008), Malach-Pines and Baruch (2007), and Malach-Pines et al. (2002) in

different countries. From the studies it could be noted that choosing stream for post-graduation is considered to be a critical decision in a life of any student as their career depends on this decision which enlightens them about necessary skills needed in that work profession (Amoah et al., 2015; Rowland, 2004; Maluwa-Banda, 1998). An incorrect decision can lead them into failure and make them unhappy and disowned by work (Maluwa-Banda, 1998). To make correct and wise decision (Lazarus and Chinwe, 2011; Barker et al, 2013), along with realizing the educational benefits (Eyo et al., 2010) would to impart self-confidence and an optimistic attitude (Ajufo, 2013) in student. The role played by different factors must be taken care of through counselling and guidance.

It appears that the most significant factors in determining a students' career choice, both for male and female students, are abilities and interest in the subject. When students choose a career in business management, "intrinsic" elements have a greater influence than "extrinsic" factors. Earlier studies highlighted the traditional view of "managerial career" which is being a male dominated occupation. Females face several hindrances in career progression in contrast to males (Simpson, 2000) and evaluated under firmer standards in comparison to their male counterpart (Morrison et., al., 1987). In order to break this stereotype, females must demonstrate their strong capabilities and outstanding performance to succeed in any profession. The objective of management education is to assist both females as well as males in enhancing their credentials and credibility. The result showed no such difference among males and females on factor and relationship influencing choice of career decision. Hall (2004) also suggested that an individual's career orientation was not related to gender (Baumeister, 1988; Eagly, 1987; Lefkowitz, 1994). Since, male and female are similar in many aspects, therefore gender doesn't affect the choice of career and profession.

VI. IMPLICATIONS

By gaining an understanding of different factors that influence the decision of students to choose MBA as a professional degree an effort can be made in the area of guidance and counseling to relate students better to their abilities and interest and also give preliminary glimpse of professional life associated with that field. The results also have an implication for vocational guidance and counseling for students aspiring for a career in management profession. Career decision plays most crucial choice in life of any student. A student's career decision determines their future, so there are a lot of factors that go into it. Possibility of each alternate decision have to be discussed in a democratic way that are relevant to their interests, skills or aspirations to get best for them. Students need to select the career as per their

capabilities and interest, so they could flourish their career in self-selected field and work with confidence. Hence, students choose the career that suits them best and interest of student should never be undermined while making a career decision. However, the results of the research have limited generalizability as the data was collected only from the small sample of students of Delhi NCR private colleges and universities pursuing MBA. Further, investigation is needed from students of different background and study covering wider geographical region.

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