

Factors Driving Vocational College Students' Selection of the Cosmetology Field

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Abstract

This descriptive study aims to identify the factors that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetics based on four factors namely interest, peers, and family. The study sample consisted of 92 cosmetology certificate students from two vocational colleges in Kuala Lumpur. A set of questionnaires was used as an instrument for this study. The reliability value of the questionnaire items from the pilot study is 0.773. The results of this study were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Window version 27.0 to obtain frequency, percentage, and mean. The findings of the study show that the highest mean value is the interest factor with a value of (4.26), while the value of the family factor is (3.80) and the value of the peer factor is (3.42). Several suggestions are made to enable further research to be done.

1. Introduction

Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) in Malaysia has thrived and created career paths and job opportunities in the skills field rather than the academic field. This is proven by the marketability percentage of TVET graduates reaching 5.5% (KPT Graduate Verification System, 2021). In general, TVET graduates who have completed their studies after 5 months have become human resources in the local private sector, followed by the non-governmental organization sector (Mokhtar & Lakman, 2021). The employability rate of TVET graduates increased by 6% from 2013 to 99% in 2017 due to outstanding achievements in career development programs and industry training, which positively impacted the satisfaction of TVET graduates (Yusop & Umar, 2018). Malaysia is currently going through a phase of rapid the status of a developed country (Adham et al., 2023). In line with this progress, qualified experts and human resources are essential to manage and lead the country. Although there are abundant job opportunities from government agencies and the private sector, the issue of unemployment is still a topic of conversation in Malaysia. National growth in this era of globalization also requires an increase in human capital and expertise (Makhbul, 2019). According to Azmi (2019), Graduates were unemployed not because they did not get a job or did not receive any job offer, it may be because of their skills did not meet the needs of the job market. Certain majors or study programs may not be in line with industry demand, making it difficult for them to get a suitable job.

1.1 Background

This field of Cosmetology in Malaysia has become the main driving force in developing the country's economy, especially during the Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR4.0) (Ministry of Economy, 2021). This study will identify the important factors that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. Among those factors are interest factors, family factors and peer factors which encourage the tendency of vocational

college students to choose the field of cosmetology as a field of specialization. The role of interest in driving the tendency of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology is important in understanding and adapting to technological progress. Involvement in fields that suit interests can not only increase motivation, but also accelerate learning and adaptation to technological developments (Orlando, 2019). In the development of career choices, interest becomes the main driver to achieve career satisfaction and professional development. The latest statistics also show cosmetology will contribute as much as 14% to Malaysia's GDP in 2022, with an added value of RM251.5 billion (Ministry of Economy, 2022). This industry is not only a catalyst for the country's economy, but also provides significant job opportunities, especially for vocational college students after graduation.

Statistics on the employability of TVET graduates show an encouraging improvement—80.48% of TVET students who get a job serve in the field of training they take, and 73.24% of graduates receive a starting salary of RM1000 and above (Mamat et al., 2019). Although there are good achievements, some issues still need to be overcome, including the lack of certain skills required in the industry or the field of cosmetology (Manap & Buntat, 2021). In conclusion, the factors that drive the selection of vocational college students to the field of cosmetology are interest, family influence, and peer support. Male and female students may choose differently due to social and cultural perceptions. The field of cosmetology also contributes greatly to the national economy and provides significant job opportunities. Family, peers, and individual interests play an important role in influencing vocational students' career choices towards the field of cosmetology.

1.2 Research Questions

In order to ensure that the objectives of the study can be achieved and further ensure that the course of the study is organized and planned, the research questions have been identified as follows:

1. Is there an interest factor that drives the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology?
2. Is there a family factor that drives the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology?
3. Is there a peer factor that drives the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology?
4. Is there a difference between men and women regarding the factors that drive Vocational College students to choose the field of cosmetology?

1.3 Literature Review

Theories, definitions and factors that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology are discussed by the researcher together with the methodology and findings of previous studies that are a source of help and support in this research. This means introducing new concepts or deepening existing concepts, as an improvement step in related fields of knowledge.

1.3.1 Technical and Vocational Education

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is one of the efforts to prepare individuals to work in various industrial sectors. TVET provides students with practical knowledge and skills relevant to the needs of the labor market. In Malaysia, TVET emphasizes the provision of important skills such as communication, problem solving, collaboration, thinking skills, creativity, and other soft skills that form the basis of marketability and career success (Abdul Ghani, 2021).

The main purpose of TVET education is to meet the industry's demand and overcome the skills gap that may exist in this country. TVET also offers an alternative to students who may not be suitable for academic education, allowing them to acquire technical expertise and enter the labor market at an earlier age (Hamid et al., 2023). TVET education involves various initiatives and collaborations between educational institutions, industry and government agencies. These include job training programs, sponsorship of vocational institutions, and training assistance. With this assistance initiative, TVET can provide students with skills that match the needs of the labor market, thus increasing their employment opportunities.

Technical and Vocational Education (TVET) plays an important role in providing individuals with the practical skills needed to enter the labor market. TVET not only provides students with technical knowledge, but also important soft skills such as communication skills, problem solving, and creativity. In Malaysia, TVET is emphasized as an alternative to academic education that allows students to acquire technical expertise and enter the labor market earlier. The study titled "Factors that Drive the Selection of Vocational College Students Towards the Field of Cosmetology" provides an interesting insight into the selection of the field of cosmetology in the context of TVET. In this study, factors such as interest factors, family factors and peer factors have been identified as the main factors that influence the choice of students in this direction.

Interest factors also affect job selection decisions (Fitria et al., 2020). Students with a strong interest in cosmetology may have had positive previous experiences in the field, such as taking a beauty course, following practical training in a beauty salon, or having a hobby related to beauty. This experience can strengthen their interest and give students the confidence to step towards the field of cosmetology as a career. In addition, working in a field that matches their interests can also increase student job satisfaction and motivation, as they can express their creativity and talent in the field they enjoy.

2. Methodology

This section covers participant selection, data collection, data analysis, and research design used to conduct the study. Achieving the objectives of the study requires comprehensive planning from the researcher.

2.1 Research Design

Systematic research is research to find new and useful information in a field. Research design is an important element in conducting a study (Snyder, 2019). Research design refers to the plan or structure that guides the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data in a research study. Research design is a process of collecting, analysing, and reporting the data produced in a study. Design is the structure of the study and includes planning the selection of sources and types of data needed to conduct the study. A survey study is a study that will be conducted through quantitative data conducted through questionnaires. The data collected is a random sample and will then be reviewed and analysed to be formulated as descriptive statistics as well as significant tests. The results of this questionnaire will give the researcher a conclusion about the factors that encourage vocational college students to pursue a career in the field of cosmetology.

2.2 Participate Selection

Purposive Sample is determined through the method of determining the sample. Sampling is a process of selecting the object of study from a group that is representative of the selected large group. Each population has the same chance to be selected as a sample (Jamian & Taha, 2020). The purpose of sampling is to obtain a sample that reflects the population in terms of variables that are the focus of the study. In this study, simple random sampling will be used where respondents will be randomly selected from the available population. Based on the sample determination table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the number of samples in this study is 92 people. Referring to the sample size determination guidelines by Krejcie & Morgan (1970), the most appropriate sample size for this study is 92 indicating the determination of the sample size that was used by the researcher. Based on this, the minimum sample size that can be used is 92 people.

2.3 Data Collection

The selection of a research method using a questionnaire is an appropriate approach in this study to collect data related to the factors that drive the tendency of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. This method allows researchers to collect data from respondents systematically and objectively.

2.4 Data Analysis

The quantitative approach used to obtain data through the questionnaire method looks at the factors that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. Descriptive and correlational methods as the main methods in this study refer to (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2012). The relationship between interest factors, family factors and peers in the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology will be evaluated through purposive sampling according to the criteria.

3. Result and Discussion

This study has been carried out based on four (4) research objectives to unravel the research questions. The first objective is to identify the factors of interest that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. While the second objective is to identify family factors that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. The third objective is to identify peer factors that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. The fourth objective is to identify the relationship between interest factors, family factors and peer factors on the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology.

3.1 Interest Factors Driving Vocational College Students' Selection of the Cosmetology Field

Table 1 Descriptive analysis of interest factors that drive students' selection towards the field of cosmetology

No	Statement	(M)	(SD)	Level
B2	I am interested in cosmetology	4.49	0.62	High
B5	I am interested in working in the field cosmetology.	4.39	0.63	High
B8	I am very interested in following this field of cosmetology because it guarantees a wide career opportunity.	4.34	0.67	High
B6	I am interested in continuing to study in the field of cosmetology.	4.28	0.67	High
B3	I am interested in becoming a famous cosmetologist.	4.24	0.61	High
B7	I like doing practical work like therapy	4.16	0.79	High
B1	massage, make-up and special facial therapy.	4.14	0.72	High
B4	I have been interested in cosmetology since school	4.08	0.62	High
B6	secondary again.	4.28	0.67	High
Overall Mean		4.26		High

This construct has 8 items and has received 92 responses from respondents. Descriptive analysis shows that interest factors that drive students towards the field of cosmetology have a positive effect. With an overall mean value of 4.26, the mean statement indicates a high interest in cosmetology. Furthermore, the small standard deviation (SD) in each statement indicates that the students' answers are consistent. All statements show high interest, with the statement "I am interested in cosmetology" getting an average value of 4.49. This shows that students are very interested in the field of cosmetology. Therefore, it can be concluded that the interest factor plays an important role in the selection of students towards the field of cosmetology. To ensure that this interest continues to grow, efforts must be made to increase this interest. In addition to that, through the findings of the selection study of asnaf students entering the field of entrepreneurship, it was also found that interest factors also greatly influence respondents in making decisions to choose the field they want to enter (Nadzri et al., 2018).

3.2 Family factors Driving Vocational College Students' Selection of the Cosmetology Field

Table 2 shows a descriptive analysis of family factors that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. All items also do not have low scores. Looking at the average value is 3.80 which gives a high level of interpretation.

Table 2 Family Factors That Encourage the Selection of Vocational College Students Towards the Field of Cosmetology

No	Problem Statement	(M)	(SD)	Level
B27	My parents have always supported me in entering this field.	4.39	0.64	High
B23	My parents feel that this field of cosmetology guarantees the future.	4.11	0.76	High
B28	I am interested in pursuing this field of cosmetology because I see my mother who ventured into the same field.	4.10	0.42	High
B21	My parents feel that this field of cosmetology suits my abilities.	4.04	0.78	High
B26	My parents are confident that I can succeed if I choose the field of study recommended by my parents/family.	3.98	1.24	High
B24	I chose the field of cosmetology because no	3.73	1.09	High

B20	want to disappoint the expectations of the mother/father/family	3.36	1.16	High
B25	My parents made the decision in choosing this field of cosmetology.	3.29	1.23	High
B22	I chose the field of cosmetology because my mother/father/family members/relatives work in the field of cosmetology.	3.20	1.26	High
Overall Mean		3.80		High

In this study, the family factors that drive students' selection towards the field of cosmetology have been analyzed descriptively. The mean for each statement indicates the average score for each item, while the standard deviation measures the range of scores for each item. The level shows the level of support or influence of family factors on choosing the field of cosmetology. The findings of the study show that family factors play an important role in influencing the decision to choose the field of cosmetology. A high mean score for statements such as "My parents always support me in entering this field" and "My parents feel that this field of cosmetology guarantees the future" shows that family support is an important factor that gives confidence to students. The results of this study clearly show that students agree that family encouragement is an important factor that influences their interest and selection of a particular educational course. The results of this study are also supported by the fact that they see the family's motivation and encouragement towards the students' academic interests (Aziz & Yusof, 2013). Boon et al (2010) study, which involved fourth-grade students at a secondary school in Skudai, Johor, also examined the reasons that drive students' selection towards the field they pursue. This study also found that they do not agree that parents force them to choose the course. On the other hand, parents only encourage them to study.

3.3 Peer Factors Driving Vocational College Students' Selection of the Cosmetology Field

The table shows a descriptive analysis of peer factors that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. All items also do not have low scores. Looking at the average value is 3.42 which gives a medium level interpretation.

Table 3 Peer Factors That Encourage the Selection of Vocational College Students Towards the Field of Cosmetology

No	Statement	(M)	(SD)	Level
B14	I was influenced by the persuasion of my peers while filling out the application form.	3.70	1.00	High
B16	My choice depends on the advice from my peers.	3.55	1.25	Medium
B10	I chose the field of cosmetology because I followed my friend.	3.48	1.30	Medium
B13	I like this field of cosmetology because it was introduced by my friend.	3.46	1.11	Medium
B9	I filled out the application form to the Vocational College cosmetology field with my friends	3.43	0.95	Medium
B18	I became interested in this field of cosmetology from information and stories from my friends.	3.38	1.12	Medium
B11	I have a schoolmate/classmate in this cosmetology field.	3.34	1.10	Medium
B17	I prefer to enroll in my field of cosmetology if any of my friends also enroll.	3.25	1.10	Medium
B15	I enjoy doing things that my friends do for me even if I have no interest in doing them	3.24	1.10	Medium
B12	I chose cosmetology because I have a friend who is studying in this program.	3.23	1.10	Medium
Overall mean		3.42		Sederhana

This finding is also in line with the opinion of Syairah & Abd Rahman (2021) who said that an individual is more easily influenced by peers than other people in many matters. In this study, it is clear that the respondents stated that they were influenced by the persuasion of their peers when filling out the application form. This is because, close relationships and the desire to be together in the same field also encourage students to follow the advice and recommendations of their friends, which ultimately influences their decision in choosing the field they want to pursue. Rosli et al. (2024), stated that the stories and experiences of peers in the chosen field also play an important role in influencing students' decisions in the selection of the courses they choose.

3.4 Gender Differences in Peer Influence on Vocational College Students' Selection of the Cosmetology Field

The table shows an independent T test analysis to see the difference between male and female students on the selection factors of Vocational College students towards the field of cosmetology. A total of 2 male students and 90 female students were involved in this study. Assumptions were made and checked, and found to be met. The findings of the study show that there is a non-significant difference between men and women in the selection factors of Vocational College students towards the field of cosmetology. According to Morgan et al. 2010, when the p value records a reading ($p < 0.05$) there is no difference between the groups then there is a significant difference between the two groups and vice versa if ($p > 0.05$) there is no difference between the groups.

From the table given, it can be seen that interest factors, peer influence factors, and family factors do not provide a significant difference between men and women in choosing the field of cosmetology. The average score for the male student interest factor $M = 4.31$ female $M = 4.27$, the male student peer factor $M = 4.45$ female $M = 3.40$ and the male student family factor $M = 4.50$ female $M = 3.80$. In relation to that, it can be concluded that there is no significant difference between male and female students regarding the selection factors of Vocational College students towards the field of cosmetology where for the interest factor the value $p=0.08$, the peer factor value $p=0.09$ and for the family factor the value $p=0.07$ which is more than 0.05. As a result, there is no difference where it proves that male students and female students on the selection factors of Vocational College students towards the field of Cosmetology. As a result of this test, it can be stated that the null hypothesis, H_0 is accepted and the alternative hypothesis, H_a is rejected, that is, there is no significant difference between male and female students regarding the selection factors of Vocational College students towards the field of Cosmetology.

Table 4 Differences Between Men and Women Regarding Selection Factors of Vocational College Students Towards the Field of Cosmetology

Variable	Gender	M	SD	t	df	p	d
Interest Factor	Male	4.31	0.88	0.16	90	0.88	0.05
	Female	4.27	0.45				
Peer Factor	Male	4.45	0.00	1.73	90	0.09	1.05
	Female	3.40	0.85				
Family Factor	Male	4.50	0.78	1.83	90	0.07	0.71
	Female	3.80	0.54				

Therefore, it can be concluded that in the context of student selection towards the field of cosmetology, the factors studied do not have a different influence between men and women. This shows that both sexes have almost the same tendency in choosing the field of cosmetology in Vocational College. With no significant differences found, this shows that the factors studied may not be the main determinants in the choice of male and female students towards the field of cosmetology.

4. Conclusion

The findings from this study have detailed and identified important factors in the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. Interest factors, peer factors and even family factors are closely related to the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. In this study it was found that the interest factor plays an important role in encouraging vocational college students to choose the field of cosmetology. Students who have a deep interest in this field are more likely to choose it. Family factors were also found to be the main motivator, where support and encouragement from family increased students' confidence in choosing the field of cosmetology. In addition, peer factors also play a large role in the choice of this field, with the advice and success of peers influencing students' decisions. Even so, there is no significant difference between male and female students regarding the selection factors of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology. Overall, the objective of this study to examine the factors that drive the selection of vocational college students towards the field of cosmetology has already been achieved.

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