

Factors influencing on Job decision of Management Undergraduates in North and East Universities of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

This paper attempts to investigate the preferences on taking the decision of Job and to find out the factors influencing on Job decision of the management undergraduate in North and East Universities of Sri Lanka. A closed ended questionnaire was developed as tool for data collection. A total number of 400 third and final year management students from 3 Universities and 2 Campuses located in North and East of Sri Lanka have been responded to the questionnaire. The quantitative analyses were conducted with the help of SPSS. The result reveals that majority of the respondents' preferred for future career developments are public sector and private sector organizations. One third of the total respondents plan to seek employment in their chosen field specially after obtaining the bachelor's degree. Further Salary, interesting job, job security and educational opportunity are the major factors for the management graduates in Job decision.

Keywords: Job decision, Management, Undergraduate, University

1. Introduction

The number of students pursuing degrees in Management has grown over the last decades. During that time, our ability to track changes and predict enrollment trends has improved. Management graduates join private, public, and other organization at different levels. Their decisions are influenced by various factors. The study focus the kinds of workplaces current management graduates are eager to work in, kind of job they expect, and kinds of salaries they expect to earn when they enter the workforce.

This research focuses on the employment preferences of management undergraduate in North and East Universities. The study examines students' where they want to work (Public sector, private sector, Non-governmental organization, own business), why they prefer particular sector/organization, what job they prefer? What level of salary they prefer etc.

2. North and East Universities

There are three universities and two campuses in North and East province of Sri Lanka. They are University of Jaffna, Eastern University, and South Eastern University. The University of Jaffna and Eastern University of Sri Lanka have campuses such as Vavuniya Campus and Trincomalee Campus. All these Universities and Campuses have management faculties and conduct management undergraduate degree programmes such as BBA, BBM, BCom, and BSc.

3. Review of Literature

More often than not, there may be numerous factors that concern job seekers in choosing a job. These factors may vary in different contexts, such as demographic factors (gender, ethnicity, geographical basis, etc), psychological factors (physical needs, security needs, social need, motivational factors, self esteem factors, etc), social factors (Statues, social norms, Social classless, etc), and other factors (Velnampy, 2012).

Weller and Jolma revealed that the job decision factor ranked most important by respondents (nurses) were as salary, position in clinical area of choice, shift of choice, benefit package, geographical area, advancement opportunity, shift differential/bonuses, relocation allowance, educational opportunity, childcare provisions (Weller and Jolma, 1991) . According to this survey, the survey respondents ranked salary and position in the clinical area of choice as most important overall. These results are similar to the findings of an early study of twenty-six job decision factors as ranked by RNs in the state of Massachusetts (Cohen and Lowell,1989) and to another study of eighteen job-decision factors as rated by senior nursing students (Burton and Burton 1982). An analysis of the significance of these decisions factors show that challenging and/or interesting work is significantly more important for graduates in choosing jobs than competitive salary; both of these factors are significantly more important than the opportunity for advancement (Edgington, 2004 Velnampy, 2012, 2004¹).

According to Seidman (2005) job seekers have to negotiate under two categories; category one is benefits such as annual bonus/incentive pay, signing bonus, commissions, stock options, profit sharing, deferred compensation, healthcare coverage - self/family, Insurance supplements, pension plan, tax/legal/financial assistance, commutation expenses, evaluations/accelerated reviews, company car, tuition assistance/professional development, professional conferences, professional Organization memberships, club memberships/gym memberships, extra vacation) based on level or seniority), pre-planned vacation, relocation pay, employment

contract/severance guarantee, and category two is position such as position description, working hours, formal/informal reporting structure, promotion potential, job enrichment, long-term potential, performance appraisal system, and travel requirements.

Although a recent American out of 11 different job selection factors, job flexibility was the second-least important criteria among both women and men, although women graduates did emphasize it slightly more than men. In a study of university students Smith and Snider (1998) found that “an ability to balance work, family, and other interests” ranked fourth out of 33 work criteria, but only 6% rated this as the most important factor (a breakdown by gender is not provided). On the other hand, according to Stoddard, Back, and Brotherton (2000), job location was the second-most important factor for both women and men, and here again women rated it somewhat more important than men. Yet the similarity of values in these respects is more striking than the differences. There is an apparent contradiction in the importance of job location (Stoddard, Back, and Brotherton, 2000).

According to StepStone.com – Europe’s leader in online career services and recruitment solution, the job selection criteria are personal development, opportunity to learn, competent boss, ability to make an impact, more responsibility, higher salary, a company with a good reputation, corporate culture, flexible working hours, office location, more benefits, less commuting, business travel, opportunity to relocate, and more holidays.

According to Pan, Cull, and Brotherton (2002) factors with the highest percentages of importance ratings were spouse/family considerations (90%), job security (87%), and geographic location (84%). Healthcare organizations should also consider including the importance of other work environment characteristics-such as staffing, management structure, and the system of care delivery-among the job-decision factors to be examined.

Women graduates are also less likely to consider career advancement and job security when selecting a job. There is a greater tendency for women than men to select jobs for enhancement of their skills and abilities, for the opportunity to work with people, and for offering them the kind of work that they like (Lowe et al., 1997; Clark, 1999).

Moy and Lee (2002) studied university undergraduates of Hong Kong, relating to their career intentions for Small and Medium enterprise (SME) as against Multinational Companies (MNC)s. The university undergraduates of Hong Kong, rated long term career prospects as the most important job attribute affecting their career choice, followed by pay, job security and managerial relationship. Moy and Lee (2002), Huang and Sverke, (2007) have considered academic major, gender and personality to determine the relationship between these three variables and business undergraduates’ preferred career with SMEs and MNCs. They found that the undergraduates who preferred to work in SMEs are mostly doing major in management and the students who preferred to work for MNCs are doing major in accounting, finance and marketing. Females preferred employment with MNCs but male preferred SMEs. Previous research on the relationship between higher education and employment undertaken by (Purcell, Elias, Davies, & Wilton, 2005), (Elias, McKnight, Simm, Purcell, & Pitcher, 1999), demonstrated the importance of subject studied. Several studies have found that career choices are determined by different motives. The most cited motives influencing the career decision are: financial success and high income (Carter, 2003), need of autonomy and independence (Van Auken, Stephens, Fry, & Silva, 2006), social recognition and status (Birley & Westhead, 1994). Economic motives were considered less important than other objectives in a study (Baumol, 1993).

In the context of environment (of cultural, social, political) Researchers have investigated the factors affecting job preference decisions among male and female college students. The fields in which women intended to work were services, personal care, education and office work (Huang & Sverke, 2007). Previous studies have shown that women tend to work in the public field and in occupations associated with lower wages. Whereas (Chevalier, 2007) discovered that men tend to be more career-driven and financially motivated.

According to above global research revealed that there are many factors considered by job seekers in selecting a job. This also varies on different factors, and contexts. In the Sri Lankan context, according to the understanding of the authors, there aren’t any research findings addressing this issue. Then, there is a theoretical as well as empirical gap between these phenomena.

4. Research Problem

The management degree programmes curriculum and structure are about similar in Sri Lankan Universities who expect to produce future managers to work in any organization but reality is different therefore this study is

going to study what are the factors determine Job decision of the undergraduates. After students passed out from the universities, they have taken several decisions on their job they are; what is the Job to join? Which sector/organization should one join? What level (size) of the organization to join? What salary job to join? The decisions are influenced by several factors such as demographic factors, psychological factors, social factors, benefits, positions, location (work place) and others.

5. Objectives of the research project

- To find the preferences of management undergraduates on taking the decision of Job.
- To find out the factors influencing on Job decision of the management undergraduate.

6. Methodology

The questionnaire was the main tool of this study. The respondents were the management undergraduate students from North and East Universities including campuses. They are University of Jaffna, Eastern University of Sri Lanaka, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Trincomalee Campus and Vavuniya Campus. It is planned to collect the data from the third year and fourth year students. It is expected to collect 100 students from each Universities and Campuses. Totally, it is expected 500 responses but 400 students responded to the study. It is 80% response rate. The quantitative data analysis was conducted with the help Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

7. Results and Discussion

The results and discussion are interpreted under the four sub headings such as student profile, preference of management graduates, job decisions, and factors influencing the job decision.

7.1 Students Profile

The table 1.1 shows the respondents profile. The most of the respondents are female students (66.5%). As far as Students parents' employment, 66% of the student's parent's father or mothers are employed. Most of the respondents (64.2%) are Sinhala students. The third year students (62.2%) and fourth year students (37.8%) responded to the questionnaire. Four specialization students (Marketing Management-09%, Human Resource Management-12.8%, Financial Management-12%, Accounting and Finance-43%) and General students-23.2% responded to the questionnaire.

Table 1.1 Students Profile

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	134	33.5
	Female	266	66.5
Parents Employment	Both parents	50	12.5
	Either Father or Mother	264	66.0
	Neither	86	21.5
Ethnicity	Sinhala	257	64.2
	Tamil	115	28.8
	Muslims	28	7.0
Year	Third	249	62.2
	Fourth	151	37.8
Specialization	Marketing	36	9.0
	Financial Management	48	12.0
	HRM	51	12.8
	Accounting and Finance	172	43.0
	General	93	23.2

7.2 Preference of Management Graduates

The table 1.2 shows the result of different aspects to know the preference of management graduates. Five aspects are analyzed to study the preference of management graduates such as sector preference, size of the organization preference, level of organization prefer, kind of job prefer, and level of salary prefer. The management graduates prefer to join different places or sectors. They are private sector (41.2%), public sector (44.2%), Non-Governmental Organization (1.5%), Own business (6.2%) and foreign (6.8%). The result reveals that most of the graduates prefer to join public sector organization. The cross tab shows that Sinhala students prefer to join

private sector, public sector, own business and foreign. Comparing Tamil students, the Sinhala students more likely to join private and they do not like to join NGOs. On the other hand, Tamil students more prefer to join public sector.

Table 1.2 kinds of workplaces current management graduates are eager to work

Ethnicity	Organization Preference					Total
	Private Sector	Public Sector	NGO	Own Business	Foreign	
Sinhala	116	112	0	20	9	257
Tamil	39	55	6	4	11	115
Muslims	10	10	0	1	7	28
Total	165	177	6	25	27	400

Table 1.3 shows that the students prefer to join large, medium and small organization. However, above average students (57.2%) of the students prefer to join large organization and very few students (1.8%) prefer small organization. The table 1.4 shows that immediately after the passed out the 50.2% students prefer to join middle level position, remaining prefer to join Top and Junior level.

Table 1.3 Size of the organization prefer

Size	Frequency	Percentage
Large	229	57.2
Medium	164	41.0
Small	7	1.8
Total	400	100.0

Table 1.4: Level of the Job prefer

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Top Level	174	43.5
Middle Level	201	50.2
Junior Level	25	6.2
Total	400	100.0

The table 1.5 illustrate that they expect different kind of job such as Accountant (33.3%), CEO (7.0%), Manager (23%), Teacher (4.7%), Banking Assistant (9.3%), Own Business (4.7%), Human Resource Manager (7.7%), Management Assistant (4.5%), and Marketing Manager (5.8%). One third of the respondents expect to join as accountant. Commerce stream students usually prefer to become Accountant for their expectation and a good number of the respondents are from Accountancy and Finance specialization. Table 1.6 explain that a substantial number of respondents expect the salary level between Rs.40, 000 to Rs. 60,000. A few respondents only expect salary more than Rs.100, 000.

Table 1.5 kind of job they expect

Job	Frequency	Percentage
Accountant	133	33.3
CEO	28	7.0
Human Resource Manager	31	7.7
Management Assistant	18	4.5
Teacher	19	4.7
Marketing Manager	23	5.8
Banking Assistant	37	9.3
Manager	92	23.0
Own Business	19	4.7
Total	400	100.0

Salaries	Frequency	Percentage
20,000>=40,000	96	24.0
40,000>=60,000	161	40.2
60,000>=80,000	43	10.8
80,000>=100,000	25	6.2

>100,000	23	5.8
Negotiable	52	13.0
Total	400	100.0

Table 1.6 Level of Salaries

7.3 Job Decision

Regarding the Job decision, the respondents (71.7%) agreed that it is difficult to take decision. 63.8% respondents agreed that stressful to choose job. 71.7% respondents agreed that they hope to achieve all aspirations through their job. 60% of the respondents believed that job decision is one time choice. On the other hand, they disagreed remaining statements on job decision. The respondents responded that they know what steps to be taken on job decision; they know what factors to be considered; they know what occupation interest them; and they sure their career preference.

Table 1.7 Job Decision

Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
There are difficulties to make a Job decision	4 (1.0%)	35 (8.8%)	74 (18.5%)	229 (57.2%)	58 (14.5%)
There is stressful to choose a job	5 (1.2%)	44 (11.0%)	96 (24.0%)	207 (51.8%)	48 (12.0%)
I will fulfill all my aspirations. I expect that through the job I choose	5 (0.5%)	29 (7.2)	82 (20.5%)	198 (49.5%)	89 (22.2%)
I believe that a job decision is a one-time choice and a life-long commitment.	10 (2.5%)	64 (16.0%)	94 (23.5%)	149 (37.2%)	83 (20.8%)
I find it difficult to make a job decision because I do not know what steps I have to take.	16 (4.0%)	87 (21.8%)	120 (30.1%)	144 (36.0%)	33 (8.2%)
I find it difficult to make a job decision because I do not know what factors to be taken into consideration.	13 (3.2%)	88 (22.0%)	117 (29.2%)	153 (38.2%)	29 (7.2%)
I find it difficult to make a job decision because I still do not know which occupations interest me.	39 (9.8%)	141 (35.2%)	92 (23.0%)	104 (26.0%)	24 (6.0%)
I find it difficult to make a job decision because I am not sure about my career preferences yet	56 (14.0%)	152 (38.0%)	85 (21.2%)	84 (21.0%)	23 (5.8%)

7.4 Factors influencing job decision

This study identified 22 factors influencing the job decision. The table 1.8 demonstrates the 22 factors and its ranking. The respondents responded that salary, interesting job, educational opportunity, job security, parent's influence, opportunity to do challenging work, other financial benefits, non-financial benefits, geographical area/job location, career advancement/development opportunity, child care provisions, family consideration, freedom at work place, social status, opportunity learn new things, Opportunity to use skills to the maximum level, Opportunity to make own decisions, Achieving something that you personally value, Organization image and reputation, Flexible working hours, More holidays and Harassment free work place are the factors influencing in their job decision. The major factors are salary, interesting job, job security and educational opportunity.

Table 1.8 Factors influencing on Job decision

Rank	Factors	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
01	Salary	-	03 (8.0%)	14 (3.5%)	120 (30.0%)	263 (65.8%)
20	Parent's influence	07 (1.8%)	24 (6.0%)	106 (26.5%)	189 (47.2%)	74 (18.5%)
10	Opportunity to do challenging work	02 (0.2%)	09 (2.2%)	59 (14.8%)	234 (58.5%)	96 (24.0%)
02	Interesting job	01 (0.2%)	01 (0.2%)	26 (6.5%)	139 (34.8%)	233 (58.2%)
06	Other Financial Benefits	01 (0.2%)	06 (1.5%)	48 (12.0%)	192 (48.0%)	153 (38.2%)
19	Non financial benefits	08 (2.0%)	25 (6.2%)	88 (22.0%)	175 (43.8%)	104 (26.0%)
13	Geographical area/job location	02 (0.5%)	17 (4.2%)	66 (16.5%)	165 (41.2%)	150 (37.5%)
08	Career Advancement /development opportunity	02 (0.5%)	04 (1.0%)	51 (12.8%)	192 (48.0%)	151 (37.8%)
04	Educational Opportunity	03 (0.8%)	05 (1.2%)	33 (8.2%)	152 (38.0%)	207 (51.8%)
21	Child care provisions	03 (0.8%)	24 (6.0%)	124 (31.0%)	183 (45.8%)	66 (16.5%)
17	Family consideration	03 (0.8%)	08 (2.0%)	96 (24.0%)	197 (49.2%)	96 (24.0%)
03	Job security	02 (0.5%)	06 (1.5%)	31 (7.8%)	145 (36.2%)	216 (54.0%)
05	Freedom at work place	03 (0.8%)	08 (2.0%)	32 (8.0%)	161 (40.2%)	196 (49.0%)
12	Social Status	03 (0.8%)	12 (3.0%)	66 (16.5%)	162 (40.5%)	157 (39.2%)
07	Opportunity to learn new things	03 (0.8%)	08 (2.0%)	45 (11.2%)	177 (44.2%)	167 (41.8%)
09	Opportunity to use skills to the maximum level	02 (0.5%)	13 (3.2%)	44 (11.0%)	170 (42.5%)	171 (42.8%)
15	Opportunity to make own decisions	04 (1.0%)	12 (3.0%)	86 (21.5%)	167 (41.8%)	131 (32.8%)
16	Achieving something that you personally value	05 (1.2%)	13 (3.2%)	84 (21%)	169 (42.2%)	129 (32.2%)
14	Organization image and reputation	05 (1.2%)	13 (3.2%)	69 (17.2%)	194 (48.5%)	119 (29.8%)
11	Flexible working hours	04 (1.0%)	11 (2.8%)	65 (16.2%)	180 (45.0%)	140 (35.0%)
22	More holidays	17 (4.2%)	59 (14.8%)	128 (32.0%)	138 (34.5%)	58 (14.5%)
18	Harassment free work place	15 (3.8%)	29 (7.2%)	65 (16.2%)	150 (37.5%)	141 (35.2%)

8. Conclusion

This study concludes the current investigation on preferences of management undergraduates on taking the decision of Job and important factors influencing on Job decision Management Undergraduates in North and East Universities of Sri Lanka. The paper begins with an introduction of the study and briefly mentions how study was conducted. The study results reveal that the management graduates still prefer to join public sectors organization. They prefer to join large organization than Medium and Small organization. They more prefer to join middle level position than top and junior level position of an organization. They prefer managerial level job based on their specialization. The result reveals that the job decision is tedious to the graduates. There are a lot

factors that influence students when choosing their job, out of twenty two factors salary, interesting job, job security and educational opportunity had the biggest influence on students in this decision.

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