**CHALLENGES FACED BY COMMERCE STUDENTS IN CHOOSING A CAREER IN BANGALORE**

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**Abstract**

Commerce students in Bangalore encounter a myriad of challenges when navigating their career paths. This research delves into these obstacles, examining factors such as limited awareness of diverse career options, intense competition, and the evolving job market. Utilizing secondary data from academic journals, institutional reports, and reputable online sources, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the hurdles faced by these students. The findings highlight the necessity for enhanced career guidance, curriculum reforms, and industry-academia collaborations to better equip commerce graduates for successful careers.

Keywords : Academic streams, Entrepreneurship, Digital marketing, Multi national corporations, Financial constraints, Professional skills, Business management, Career awareness.

**Introduction**

Choosing a career is one of the most crucial decisions in a student's life, shaping their professional journey and overall future. For commerce students in Bangalore, this decision is particularly complex due to the city’s dynamic job market, diverse career opportunities, and evolving industry requirements. Bangalore, often referred to as the "Silicon Valley of India," is a thriving hub for finance, technology, and business, attracting multinational corporations, startups, and established industries. While this economic vibrancy provides commerce graduates with numerous career prospects, it also presents unique challenges in selecting the right path.

Commerce is one of the most popular academic streams in India, offering students a broad spectrum of career opportunities, including accounting, finance, banking, business management, entrepreneurship, digital marketing, and emerging fields such as fintech and data analytics. However, this vast array of options can be overwhelming, leaving students uncertain about the best path to take. The lack of structured career guidance, industry expectations, financial constraints, and social pressures further complicate decision-making. Unlike students in technical fields such as engineering or medicine, commerce students often do not have a fixed trajectory and must explore multiple avenues before settling on a career choice.

The gap between education and industry requirements also plays a crucial role in the difficulties commerce students face. The traditional commerce curriculum in many universities is heavily focused on theoretical concepts, often lacking practical applications and industry-specific skills. Employers today seek candidates with hands-on experience, technical proficiency, and soft skills such as problem-solving, communication, and adaptability. However, many students graduate with limited exposure to real-world business environments, making it challenging to secure well-paying jobs in competitive sectors. This mismatch between academic knowledge and employer expectations results in lower employability rates and increased struggles in the job market.

**Objectives**

The objectives of this research are:

To identify the key challenges faced by commerce students in Bangalore when selecting a career.

To analyze the impact of these challenges on students’ career decisions.

To suggest strategies that can assist students in overcoming these obstacles.

**Review of Literature**

The transition from academic life to professional employment is a critical phase for students, often fraught with uncertainties and challenges. Existing literature underscores several factors influencing career choices among commerce students:

1. Sharma and Singh (2024) emphasizes that personal interests and perceptions of future job prospects significantly influence career choices among commerce students. The research indicates that while personal and educational backgrounds affect career decisions, external factors like peer and family influence are less impactful. Additionally, barriers such as financial constraints and personal difficulties can moderate the relationship between influencing factors and career choices, underscoring the need for supportive interventions.

2. Ivanova et al. (2023) explores the complexities of career decision-making among students. The study highlights that students often feel overwhelmed by the vast amount of information and the ambiguity of the job market. Implementing structured career development courses can enhance students' readiness and confidence in making informed career decisions.

3. Resources like the upGrad blog (2024) provide comprehensive lists of potential career options, ranging from traditional roles like Chartered Accountancy to emerging fields such as Digital Marketing. However, the sheer volume of choices necessitates effective guidance to help students align their interests with viable career paths.

4. A literature by Gupta and Kaur (2015) discusses the dynamic nature of online retail and the necessity for students to adapt to technological advancements. Understanding modern e-commerce trends is crucial for students aiming to enter this sector.

5. Gati and Saka (2001) identify various difficulties high school students face in career decision-making, such as lack of information and internal conflicts. These challenges can persist into higher education, affecting commerce students' ability to make confident career choices. Addressing these difficulties through counseling and support services is essential.

6. An article by Chegg India (2024) outlines lucrative career options for commerce students, including roles like Investment Banker and Financial Analyst. While financial incentives are appealing, students must also consider their aptitude and interest in these fields to ensure long-term satisfaction.

**Research Methodology**

This study employs a qualitative research methodology, primarily utilizing secondary data sources. Data was collected from academic journals, reports from educational institutions, government publications, and reputable online platforms. The data was then analyzed to identify recurring themes and challenges faced by commerce students in Bangalore.

**Findings and Discussion**

While specific data on the exact number of commerce students receiving counseling in each Bangalore college is unavailable, platforms like Edumilestones have made significant strides in this area. They have counseled over 350,000 candidates nationwide, impacting the careers of more than 100,000 students and professionals annually. In 2022, Edumilestones surpassed 300,000 career counseling reports in India, offering services that include career assessments, course selection guidance, and college suitability matching. This indicates a growing awareness and utilization of career counseling services among students, including those in Bangalore.

Quantifying the exact number of students experiencing career confusion relative to available opportunities is challenging due to a lack of specific data. However, the increasing demand for career counseling services suggests that many students seek guidance to navigate the multitude of career options available. The presence of numerous career counselors and platforms in Bangalore indicates a proactive approach to addressing career-related uncertainties among students.

Placement statistics vary across institutions. For instance, during the 2020 placement drive at Bangalore University, out of 2,080 graduating students, 323 secured placements, resulting in a placement rate of approximately 15.5%. The average salary package offered was INR 5 LPA, with the highest reaching INR 15 LPA. These figures highlight the competitive nature of the job market and the importance of institutional support in facilitating employment opportunities for graduates.

Specific data on the number of internships conducted by each college and the subsequent skills acquired by students is limited. However, many colleges in Bangalore emphasize the importance of internships as part of their curriculum, recognizing their role in enhancing employability. Internships provide practical experience, allowing students to apply theoretical knowledge and develop industry-relevant skills, thereby improving their prospects in the corporate sector.

Nationally, the employability rate among Bachelor of Commerce graduates was about 48% in 2024, indicating that nearly half of the graduates were considered employable in the job market. This underscores the necessity for continuous skill development and career planning to align with industry demands.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

Commerce students in Bangalore face significant challenges in their career decision-making processes. Addressing these issues necessitates a holistic approach involving curriculum reforms, enhanced career guidance, and stronger industry-academia linkages. By implementing these strategies, stakeholders can better prepare students to navigate the complexities of the modern job market.

**Limitations of the Study**

This study is limited by its reliance on secondary data, which may not capture the most current trends and student experiences. Future research could benefit from primary data collection, such as surveys and interviews, to gain deeper insights into the challenges faced by commerce students.

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