Peer and Friends and Career Decision Making: A Critical Analysis

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Abstract: Peer and friends are important aspect of socialization process and their influence and pressure has also received wide acknowledgement in shaping and molding the course of an individual life. The current discourse is based on content analysis as well as field information which explores the nature, level and extent of peer and friends influence in career decision making process of an individual. The data has been collected through library method i.e. searching relevant books, journals, articles, news papers and even internet sources while field information has been obtained through questionnaire from 100 students using random sampling method. All the collected information have critically analyzed, debated and explained to produce theory for generalization while the field information has been analyzed in the form of frequencies and percentages through chi-square test. The analysis and discussion thus give rise to an argument that although family i.e. parents and other family members primarily geared and transformed the behavior of the children in multiple ways, however; peer influence is an asset for developing career opportunities and decision making among youth.

Key words: Behavior, Modification, Learning, Career, Decision making, Opportunities etc

INTRODUCTION

Friends and peer group are important for individual socialization as well as behavioral modification while such group include same-age group i.e. not necessarily friends while its formation is dependent on multiple factors including situation, an accident, or association [1]. The development of child is initially the outcome of family, however; peer overtakes the socialization process with the selection and adoption of lifestyle, appearance, social activities and academics etc [2]. Similarly, peer and friends are pivotal and dramatic in shaping individual’s perceptions, attitudes and ideas to understand the outside world as well as decisions in future lives while [3] accounted such relations as major supporting pillar in times of distress and comforts.

Research and scholarships on the issue of friends and peer influence suggest that peer and friends look beyond the confines of home to explore and find avenues that make their direction and self-expression more evident [4]. Similarly, friends and peers are helpful in examining and scrutinizing feelings, beliefs and ideas in an acceptable manner [5]. Besides, at the level of decision making among youth, studies report that most of the decisions are dependent on ability, education, teacher advice, level of counseling with peers and even cultural and familial background of friends [6-11]. Recently, potential friends and peers are potential sources of positive relations towards education, job search and even joining a social or political organization [12-16]. Relationally, as noted by [17-20] that negative influences are overt in the form of delinquency, drug use, alcohol consumption, smoking, sexuality and school dropout. Further, it has been argued by Thomas and Webber [21, 22] that the influences are dependent on male and female, their dwellings, livelihood, classes, subjects and their duration spend.

Peer influence is more observable in friendship and mutual relations and among same-sex and boys significantly influence [23]. Besides, the influence of peer
Hypothesis 1: Friends and Peer are influential in selection of courses and their decision making process.

Hypothesis 2: Peer and friends are more pivotal in career decision making process of individual.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Nature and Purpose and Area of the Study: The nature of the current study is quantitative with explanation and narration of the given data while focusing to analyze the relation of peer and friends in career decision making process. The study was therefore conducted at graduate level in the University of Malakand Khybr Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan.

Population and Sampling Procedure: Among the total 3441 students of graduate level, randomly, 04 departments were selected and giving equal opportunities and chance to all of the students, a sample of 25 each from the selected departments i.e. 100 from all the four departments including male and female were selected.

Tools of Data Collection and Analysis: The information was finally collected through structured questionnaire where questionnaires were personally distributed and collected at the same time. The data has been tabulated with frequency distribution tables against each of the factor in the form of percentage as well as detailed discussion. Besides, the data has been verified with chi-square test along with graphic presentation [37].

DISCUSSION

Friends and Peer and Academic Choices: The information and its findings indicate friends and peer group are influential in promoting academic choices. The major portion of the sample data supports the contribution of friends and peer in various aspects of the academic choices. The field data and their results have been discussed in percentage form while presented in the form of table (Table 1) and Figure 1.

The tabular information illustrates that majority (70%) of the peer and friends perceive that friends and
Fig 1:

Table 2: Friends and Peer in Career Decision-Making (N=100)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Friends and Peer in Career Decision-Making</th>
<th>To some extent</th>
<th>To greater extent</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Help in Career Decision</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help in Selection of Profession</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help in Selection of Job</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps in Employment</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help in Earning</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>08%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The value of \( P = .000 < .05 \), \((\chi^2) = 2.33E+2, \text{df.} = 15\) shows a significant relation between the given variables with the chi-square test.

Influence the selection of subject to a greater extent and (24%) to some extent respectively. The selection of a class peer and the influence of the peer and friends has been supported by 68% and 20% of the respondents to greater and some extent while the selection of laboratory through friends and peer has been opted by 75% and 15% to greater extent as well as some extent respectively. Similarly, as many as 80% of the respondents are of the view that the selection of a library and books owe much influence of their peers and friends (supported to a greater extent) while 11% to some extent while in this context, the selection of co-curricular activities and time provision of homework was supported by 78% and 80% to a greater extent and 13% and 12% to some extent in both of the opinion. To conclude the discussion, peer and friends are important in academic choices in the life of friends and peer. The given information are graphically represented in figure-1 below:

Besides, the level of influence as mentioned in the hypothetical statement (Hypothesis-1) is measured through chi-square test with a given value of \( P = .000 < .05 \). The value thus confirms that the given results are significant and the relationship is strong between the mentioned variables.

**Friends and Peer in Career Decision-making:**
The information with regard to the influence of peer and friends in decision making process with respect to career is discussed and analyzed in tabular for (see Table-2) and the graphic display has been made in figure-2. Again the information clearly affirms that during the course of life, peer and friends dominate the future decision making regarding jobs and related career.

The statistics in the form of percentages shows that a thumping majority i.e. 70% agrees that peer and friends helps in career decision making to a greater extent and 25% believe it to some extent. Similarly, the data shows that professional career is mostly decided and influenced by peer and friends i.e. such statement has been supported to a greater extent by 69% of the respondents.
and 22% of respondents to some extent. Besides, 75% of the population supports the idea that peer and friends are majorly helping in the selection of job i.e. supported to a greater extent and 11% support the statement to some extent in this regard. Lastly, the employment opportunities and earning tendencies has been analyzed in the table and the statements have been supported 80% in both of the categories to a greater extent and 11% and 12% to some extent respectively (see figure-2 below):

Illuminating and analyzing the results of the given information with respect to the tables and hypothesis 02), the test statistics in the form of chi-square concluded that a positive and strong association exist between the variables. The value of $P=.000<.05$ and $\chi^2 = 2.33E2$, df. = 15 show that the results are linked in a positive manner and thus the given hypothesis is valid.

**CONCLUSION**

The study and its findings indicate that peer and friends have considerable impetus towards career decisions and academic choices. However, if we look to the role of parents in the socialization process and personality development, they usually play the initial leading roles in the value transmission but peer and friends seem to have the greatest role in adaptation of lifestyle, appearances, decision making and even educational choices. The present study concludes that peer and friends dominate in academic choices and career decision making process. The information illustrates that peer and friends have a positive role in selection of subjects, selection of a class, selection of laboratory, library and books and facilitation in homework and co-curricular activities owe much influence of their peers and friends. The statistics regarding career decision making shows that peer and friends helps in career decision making, professional career, helping in the selection of job, help in employment opportunities and earning tendencies are mostly influence by peer and friends. Illuminating and analyzing the results of the given information with respect to the tables and hypothesis, it has been concluded that peer and friends are pivotal in career decision making process of the peers and friends.

**REFERENCES**