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# DIAGNOSIS OF CAREER READINESS AMONG SENIOR UNDERGRADUATES AND GRADUATE STUDENTS: DIAGNOSTIC TOOLS, RESULTS OF CONFIRMATORY EXPERIMENT

**Abstract:** This study delves into the intricate landscape of career decision-making, transcending the conventional job selection paradigm to encompass a holistic understanding of oneself, an awareness of potential vocations, and insights into developmental trajectories. Conducted at Toraighyrov University in the Kazakhstan, the research engaged 310 participants, comprising 215 undergraduates and 95 graduate students. Spanning humanities and STEM fields. Key findings emphasize the critical need for tailored interventions, including a specialized career course targeting information utilization skills and self-awareness. The proposed enhancement of one-on-one career counseling sessions aims to empower students with lifelong skills for effective self-management. Employing the Career Decision-making Difficulties Questionnaire (and the Six Phases of Career Decision-making Questionnaire, the study delineates the six phases of career decision-making, shedding light on significant challenges that serve as prognostic indicators of career readiness motivation. A noteworthy finding reveals that 43% of fourth-year undergraduates and 47% of graduate students are positioned in the pivotal fourth phase, representing a fundamental competency for those embarking on their professional journeys. Furthermore, the study underscores the rarity of achieving the sixth phase, symbolizing a fully determined career choice, with only 15% of graduate-level respondents and 7% of undergraduates reaching this advanced level of decision-making prowess.

**Key words:** career choice, university students' career development, career decision-making, career readiness, higher education, psychological and educational support, undergraduate and graduate education.

## Introduction

Rapid transformation has taken place in the Kazakhstan higher education system over the last ten years. The transition to a three-level education system (bachelor, masters, and doctoral degrees) has created a new educational context and motivation to research the psychological and educational readiness of students for independent planning of their future profession as they develop competencies necessary for making career decisions. Reforms in Kazakhstan's higher education system have affected almost all education levels and led to changes in the educational process requirements. Research indicates the integrated, interdisciplinary, and systemic nature of the learning process, as a result of improved education quality, personal orientation, continuity, and the multiple levels of study available. Current requirements set for bachelors and masters degrees reflect the importance of acquiring competencies which contribute to the growth of a person as a professional who knows how to set goals and make responsible decisions independently and in challenging circumstances. Thus, the current educational context and its requirements have established the need to describe effective ways of developing student competencies in career decision-making.

Contemporary circumstances establish fresh norms and frequently result in a reduced demand for graduates in the job market, a diminished enthusiasm to pursue careers in their field,

and the challenge of unemployment. There is a necessity to devise innovative approaches and strategies for engaging with students, as well as to offer guidance to career counselors in Kazakhstan universities. This is essential to proficiently align with the current demands imposed on graduates.

Young people are faced with making important decisions, including career-related ones, during the transition to adulthood. This is the phase when they must invest resources in a specific area of education or vocational training. However, the challenge is that this happens before they have accumulated sufficient life experience and understanding future work environment or actual work experience that will help them make conscious decisions and develop a sense of vocational identity. Currently, young people need support and advice from professionals, such as career/educational counselors and academic advisors.

Seeking employment, gaining suitable job opportunities, and strategizing future career trajectories are recurrent challenges confronting university graduates subsequent to the attainment of their qualifications. Impediments to the effective employment of university graduates encompass:

- The absence of mechanisms to establish a correlation between the labor market and educational programs.
- The human resource policies of numerous organizations, primarily concentrating on immediate achievements rather than future development.
- A prevalent deficiency in the essential skills among graduates for self-determination in the labor market, career advancement, and effective negotiation with employers during interviews.
- A notable lack of self-esteem among university graduates concerning their vocational qualification level.

Within our specific context, university graduates grapple with additional factors beyond their control. For instance, certain educational programs in Kazakhstan universities, although aligning students with the National Classifier of the Republic of Kazakhstan (NCP RK), National Qualification Frameworks (NQF), and Industry Qualification Frameworks (IQF), are inadequately represented in the country's labor market (MLSP, 2012). The professional and qualification requirements of most employers in Kazakhstan have surpassed the ambit of educational programs and standards. Despite the annual emergence of new integrated professions, educational programs directed at fulfilling these evolving requirements are conspicuously absent.

Moreover, beyond professional and qualification criteria, commonly referred to as 'hard skills,' employers are placing growing importance on the personal attributes or 'soft skills' of their employees. Universities, however, tend to accord less emphasis to the development of students' soft skills, predominantly concentrating on hard skill formation, which is regarded as the principal outcome of educational programs. Ideally, students should have the opportunity to cultivate a diverse range of qualities and skills during their university studies. Jones, Baldi, Phillips, and Waikar (2017) posit that, beyond grade point averages, recruiters are actively seeking employees with well-honed soft skills. These soft skills encompass self-awareness, respect for others, leadership acumen, a positive attitude, teamwork, self-confidence, critical thinking, and effective communication. Professionals are mandated not only to master the technical dimensions of their job but also to possess a repertoire of various soft skills (De Vos et al., 2021).

. Typically, hard skills are acquired through formal training and education, whereas soft skills are cultivated through personal experiences and reflection (De Vos et al., 2021). In the labor market, success for a young specialist hinges equally on both hard and soft skills. Nonetheless, students endowed with robust soft skills enjoy a competitive advantage over their counterparts during interviews, resume and cover letter creation, and securing their initial job placements.

Moreover, university graduates possessing specific professional knowledge and skills but lacking work experience encounter socio-psychological challenges when endeavoring to secure a workplace aligned with their preferences and ambitions. Many of them necessitate career

counseling services and psychological assistance. For successful employment, possessing a high-quality education and theoretical knowledge is inadequate. University graduates must also cultivate practical skills in communicating with employers, an understanding of the psychological intricacies of interviewing, proficiency in writing resumes and cover letters, and familiarity with current labor market trends and job search technologies.

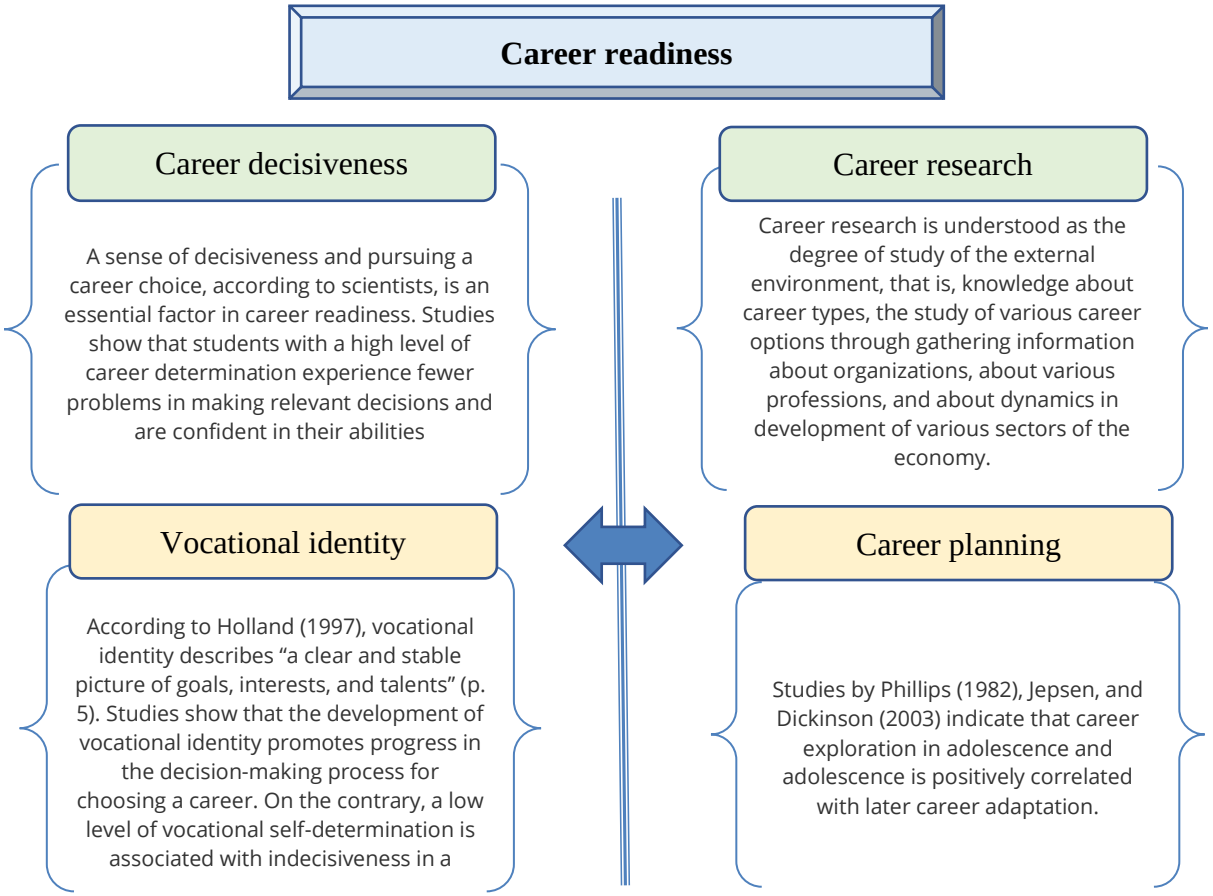
Consequently, the imperative task in higher education in Kazakhstan becomes the cultivation of vocational identity and psychological readiness for career decision-making among students.

The examination of career planning, readiness, and development has been thoroughly explored through well-established career development theories, such as Super's Theory, Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, Holland's Theory of Vocational Personality, and the Theory of Career Construction. A comprehensive understanding of these established and contemporary career development theories is imperative for effective career counseling, contributing significantly to supporting students in their career progression.

Career readiness, as defined by most scholars, denotes the capacity to effectively engage in the process of career decision-making and make judicious career choices. Super asserted that youth exhibit varying levels of readiness for educational and future career. Super emphasized that this readiness should be rooted in the cultivation of essential attributes, encompassing attitudes toward career development, behaviors, and cognitions essential for the formation of a robust vocational identity (Super, 2021). In alignment with Super's theoretical framework, researchers have directed their attention to the structural elements of career readiness, encompassing aspects like attitudes toward planning, exploration, competencies in making career decisions, and the capability to gather information about professions and career prospects (Figure 1).

**Figure 1**

*Components of students' career readiness according to Hirschi and Läge*




*Note: the figure was created by authors on the bases of literature review.*

Bandura's socio-cognitive theory of career development revolves around the notion of self-efficacy, an amalgamation of an individual's knowledge and capabilities that influences subsequent professional actions. This theory aims to clarify the origins of interest in careers, the development of career plans, and the decision-making process, all rooted in an individual's perception of their abilities and skills. Bandura posits that self-efficacy is molded by past achievements, observations of others' reactions, and verbal and non-verbal beliefs. The Triadic Reciprocal Model of Causality within Bandura's theory posits that human efforts' outcomes comprise personal traits, actions and behaviors of individuals surrounding the person, and external factors.

Holland's Theory of Vocational Personality concentrates on vocational personality types as primary factors influencing career choice and development. Introduced in 1959, this early career development theory posits that career satisfaction is intricately linked to the alignment between an individual's personality and the work environment. Holland delineated six 'Holland Codes' or 'Holland Occupational Themes,' proposing that individuals with highly coherent and distinct personality profiles are likely to have more well-defined identities, make career decisions more effortlessly, and encounter enhanced stability in their career paths.

Career Construction Theory (CCT), a contemporary addition to career development theories, elucidates the interpretive and interpersonal processes through which individuals organize personal characteristics, establish directions for vocational behavior, and make sense of their careers. Though less prevalent in educational organizations for student career counseling, CCT is frequently applied to understand the complex experiences of full-time employed adults concurrently pursuing post-secondary degrees.

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), an extension of Bandura's social cognitive theory, was developed by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994). It asserts that personal characteristics, external circumstances, and overt actions interact to influence each other and foster development (Wright et. al, 2019). SCCT is often employed to scrutinize structural components such as self-esteem and self-confidence, delineate consequences, and elucidate connections between structures, interests, abilities, and aspirations. Acknowledging the dynamic nature of the world, SCCT contends that personal and professional changes are intertwined with technological advancements and globalization.

In summary, career readiness entails a strategic plan for career and personal development, encompassing beliefs, attitudes, motivation, emotions, abilities, behaviors, and actions conducive to successful career building. A successful career, by definition, aligns with individual expectations. Career counselors or those responsible for student career advising at universities should consider various career theories, as they provide diverse perspectives on addressing individuals' developmental needs, thereby contributing to the sustainability of career counseling services.

In the realm of Western education and psychology, the examination of career development and preparedness is conducted by employing career decision-making theories. These theories are grounded in methodologies that intricately model the complexities inherent in the process of career decision-making—an endeavor where individuals assess various alternatives with the aim of choosing the most desirable outcome (De Vos et al., 2021). As articulated by Kulscar and Gati (2020), career decisions encompass choosing an occupation, associated educational training, subsequent job selection, determining whether to remain in a job or transition to another, opting for formal and informal advanced training, and more. However, individuals often encounter difficulties during such decisions, hindering the decision-making process or leading to suboptimal choices.

Our examination explores models that explicate the intricacies of career decision-making processes, encompassing individual behavior patterns, the acquisition of information, challenges in dealing with indecision, career maturity, and adjustments to professional life. Present models conceptualize competencies in career decision-making as dynamic processes characterized by

specific levels and phases. Gati and Tal (2022) underscore particular decision points along the developmental continuum, offering a clearly defined framework that can be tailored to diverse situations.

The cognitive-informational process, as delineated by Sampson et al. (2014), delineates five crucial stages in the trajectory of career decision-making: communication (identifying a career problem), analysis (highlighting relationships between problems), synthesis (creating alternatives), assessment (evaluating priorities), and execution (developing strategies to make a choice). In the research conducted by Germeijs and Verschueren (2006), six distinct stages were identified as integral to the process of deciding on a career. Additionally, Esbroeck et al. (2005) proposed a dynamic model with six analogous stages in the context of career decision-making.

Gati and Tal's model, known as the 'Examination, In-depth Research, and Selection' model, presents a contemporary framework structured around three integral phases: considering potential alternatives based on individual preferences, engaging in in-depth exploration of effective alternatives, and ultimately selecting the most suitable alternative (Gati & Tal, 2022).

Hirschi and Läge (2017) pinpoint critical parameters for successful career development, emphasizing career decisiveness, planning, research, and vocational identity. These factors influence career readiness and manifest at various decision-making stages, directly impacting readiness levels. Low levels in any factor can hinder decision-making, potentially impeding the career paths of students and graduates.

There are many varieties of decisions. Most routine decisions have no long-term consequences, whereas those with long-term and significant consequences, such as having a child, are made infrequently (Gati and Kulcsár, 2021). Career decision-making extends beyond job selection; it involves understanding one's desires and needs, profound self-knowledge, and ideas about current and potential development. Gati et al. (2012) define career decision-making as the process individuals undergo when exploring career alternatives, comparing them, and making choices. Four key components characterize career decision-making competence: adequate confidence in the process, objective analysis of existing information, consideration of personal and others' experiences, and successful career decision-making.

Achieving success in becoming professionals may be impacted by various internal and external factors, both objective and subjective. Factors such as unwillingness to decide, lack of necessary information, and inconsistency in available information contribute to low competence levels in career decision-making, particularly among university students. Lack of motivation, indecision, and self-doubt may lead to an unpreparedness for decision-making.

Analyzing models proposed by Gati et al. (2012) and Hirschi et al. (2012), we identify specific difficulties categorized into ten main aspects. Difficulties may arise before the decision-making process (lack of readiness) or during the process (lack of reliable information or its absence). Hirschi et al. (2012) divide the six phases into three stages: before decision-making (phase 1), during decision-making (phases 2–5), and after decision-making (phase 6). Stepping in career may not cover every stage, and the process may not always yield effective solutions. Our study employs the model by Hirschi et al.(2012) to determine students' developmental phases and the structural model by Gati et al. (2012) for a comprehensive understanding of spheres involved in the process.

Student career counseling is pivotal in university operations, ensuring a smooth transition from studies to vocational life. Graduate employment rates often indicate the success of the university's educational programs, with the quality of employment being a crucial factor. In 2022, Toraighyrov University reported a reasonably high average employment rate of 80% for graduates. However, challenges arise when examining employment quality in specific programs, where rates fall below 50%. This study focuses on humanities and STEM specialties, specifically targeting programs with lower employment rates to identify students' career readiness levels and propose ways to enhance career development support at Toraighyrov University. The study aims to

ascertain the career decision-making phases students are in (bachelor's and master's degrees) and the primary challenges they encounter.

**Methods and materials**

The research was conducted between March and June 2023 at Toraighyrov University, a regional four-year institution in Kazakhstan. Data was gathered from two groups of students, namely undergraduates and graduates, through the utilization of online surveys. The participants (n=310) included third and fourth-year undergraduates (n=215) and graduate students (n=95). Purposeful sampling was utilized to ensure participants contributing rich and relevant content to the study (Patton, 2002). The average age of participants was 20 years, 5 months, with 55% male. Identified were 105 third-year students (34.4%), 110 fourth-year students (35.4%), and 95 graduate students (31.1%). The largest racial group was Kazakh (36%), followed by Russian (28%), Tatar (12.5%), Ukrainian (5.5%), German (5%), and multicultural or other (14%). (Table 1)

**Table 1**

*Student Demographics*

| Major / Demographics | **STEM** | **Humanities** |
|---|---|---|
| Number | **177** | **133** |
| **Gender** | | |
| Male | 143 | 28 |
| Female | 34 | 105 |
| Did not identify | | |
| **Age** | | |
| 18–22 | 142 | 115 |
| 23–27 | 31 | 15 |
| 27–30 | 4 | 3 |
| Did not identify | - | - |
| **Nationality** | | |
| Kazakh | 49 | 60 |
| Russian | 67 | 19 |
| Tatar | 18 | 21 |
| Ukrainian | 5 | 12 |
| German | 15 | 0 |
| Other | 23 | 21 |
| Did not identify | - | - |
| **Form of education** | | |
| Full time student | 177 | 133 |
| **Previous education level** | | |
| High-school | 80 | 96 |
| College | 97 | 37 |
| **Course** | | |
| 3rd year | 62 | 43 |
| 4$^{th}$ year | 60 | 50 |
| Graduate students (Masters degree) | 55 | 40 |

*Note: the table was created by authors.*

Participants were selected through the psychology department of Toraighyrov University. All students at the university take a psychology course, either Leadership Psychology for undergraduates or General Psychology for graduate students. The survey took

1–1.5 hours to complete, and participants could choose between English and Russian. The surveys were anonymous, and participants could withdraw at any time.

Instruments included a demographic survey, the Six Phases of Career Decision-making (Hirschi& Läge, 2017), and the Career Decision Making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDMDQ) by Gati et al. (2020).

The demographic survey collected information on age, gender, nationality, major, form of study (full-time/part-time), and course/degree.

The CDMDQ aimed to understand students' needs and identified difficulties in career decision-making. It comprised three clusters: lack of readiness, lack of information, and inconsistent information and conflicts. The 32 identified difficulties were distributed across ten sub-scales, assessed on a 1 to 9 scale (1: does not describe me; 9: describes me well).

The Six-Phase Model of Career Decision-making determined students' stage in their career decision-making. The CDMDQ identified difficulties, while the Six-Phase Model determined the stage, with the sixth phase indicating complete readiness. This method offers practical applicability in career counseling (Sampson et al., 2014).

**Results and discussion**

Career Decision-making Difficulties Questionnaire (CDMDQ). The CDMDQ criteria were categorized into three groups based on difficulty levels: salient difficulty, moderate difficulty, and negligible difficulty (Hirschi, 2012). Higher scores indicated more difficulty, with a salient level correlated with scores from 9 to 7, moderate level from 6 to 4, and negligible level from 3 to 1.

Table 2 illustrates the results of undergraduate and graduate students for the 'Lack of readiness' (LR) cluster of CDMDQ. Both groups exhibited high levels of difficulties, with STEM majors scoring an average of 6.5 points out of 9 and humanities students scoring 7.03 points out of 9. The data suggests a sufficient level of motivation for career decision-making, coupled with a moderate level of difficulties related to dysfunctional beliefs. Notably, both STEM and humanities students faced salient difficulty in general indecisiveness, indicating a potential lack of skills development in career decision-making (Jepson and Dickson, 2011; Rochat, 2019).

**Table 2**

*Analysis of results for the cluster 'lack of readiness' (CDMDQ) with distribution of results by difficulty levels (salient, moderate, negligible)*

| Levels | N | Motivation | | | General Indecisiveness | | | Dysfunctional Beliefs | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Salient % | Moderate % | Negligible % | Salient % | Moderate % | Negligible % | Salient % | Moderate % | Negligible % |
| **STEM** | 177 | *16,16* | *36,52* | *47,32* | *38,92* | *46,10* | *14,97* | *21* | *56,70* | *22,3 %* |
| **Humanities** | 133 | *23,31* | *50,37* | *26,32* | *43,60* | *36,09* | *20,30* | *33.08* | *48,87* | *18,05* |

Note: the table was created by authors on the bases of experiment

Table 3 presents the results for the 'Lack of information' (LI) cluster of CDMDQ. Both undergraduate and graduate students showed a moderate level of difficulties on average. This could be attributed to a lack of specialized courses guiding students on analyzing available information about their future occupations.

Moreover, students frequently face a deficiency of assistance when seeking supplementary information about their potential occupations and career prospects. The scale measuring 'lack of information about the self' revealed a moderate degree of challenges in

career decision-making, potentially attributed to participants having undergone a psychology course, which contributed to their self-awareness.

**Table 3**

*Analysis of results for the cluster 'lack of information' (CDMDQ) with distribution of results by difficulty levels (salient, moderate, negligible)*

| | Profession | STEM | Humanities |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Levels | | |
| Sub-scales | N | 177 | 133 |
| **Lack of information about process** | salient % | *29,35* | *34,58* |
| | moderate % | *54,91* | *51,12* |
| | negligible % | *15,74* | *14,2* |
| **Lack of information about self** | salient % | *49,10* | *36,09* |
| | moderate % | *33,54* | *44,41* |
| | negligible % | *17,36* | *19,5* |
| **Lack of information about occupation** | salient % | *36,52* | *48,36* |
| | moderate % | *44,32* | *32,85* |
| | negligible % | *19,16* | *18,79* |
| **Lack of additional information** | salient % | *34,73* | *38,33* |
| | moderate % | *42,52* | *38,36* |
| | negligible % | *22,75* | *23,31* |

Note: the table was created by authors on the bases of experiment.

Table 4 illustrates the results for the 'Inconsistent Information (IC)' cluster of CDMDQ. Both groups demonstrated moderate difficulty levels in scales related to unreliable information and internal and external conflicts. Moderate levels on the 'internal and external conflicts' scale indicated challenges associated with societal demands faced by students when seeking employment.

**Table 4**

*Analysis of results for the 'Inconsistent Information' cluster (CDMDQ) with distribution of results by difficulty levels (salient, moderate, negligible)*

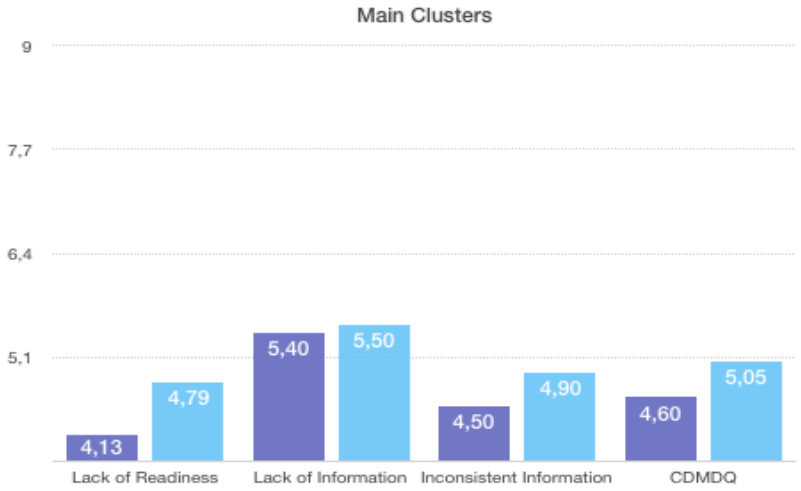
| | | Unreliable Information | | | Internal Conflicts | | | External Conflicts | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Levels | N | Salient % | Moderate % | Negligible % | Salient % | Moderate % | Negligible % | Salient % | Moderate % | Negligible % |
| **STEM** | 177 | *24,37* | *43,22* | *32,41* | *33,52* | *41,70* | *24,78* | *32,74* | *51,91* | *15,35* |
| **Humanities** | 133 | *33,33* | *38,36* | *28,31* | *44.08* | *39,87* | *16,05* | *32,58* | *49,22* | *18,2* |

Note: the table was created by authors on the bases of experiment

Figure 2 indicates that the 'Lack of information' cluster presented the highest difficulties in career decision-making. The other two clusters showed average difficulty levels, suggesting the potential for enhancing readiness through focused short-term courses for both undergraduate and graduate students.

**Figure 2**

*Comparative analyses of career decision-making questionnaire clusters*




*Note: the figure was created by authors on the bases of experiment*

In the diagram results of two groups for CDMDQ 'Inconsistent Information' cluster are presented. Dark blue bar represents results of students majoring in STEM, light blue bar represents results of students majoring in humanities. Abbreviations: CDDMQ – total scores on the Career Decision-Making Difficulties Questionnaire

Six-Phase Model of Career Decision-making Questionnaire. Table 5 displays the distribution of participants across career decision-making phases, revealing distinctions between third and fourth-year undergraduates and graduate students. Over 50% of students, especially in the third year, are in the initial stages of career planning (phases 1, 2, and 3). Those in the second phase may not fully comprehend their strengths and weaknesses in the future occupation, while participants in the third phase lack sufficient orientation in the current labor market (Patton, M, 2002; Sampson et al., 2004).

The majority are in the fourth phase, utilizing career planning skills, with a smaller proportion in the fifth phase having defined their career choice but with unstable vocational intentions. Only 15% of graduate-level respondents and 7% of fourth-year undergraduates have reached the sixth phase, indicating fully developed career decision-making competencies.

Results highlight that a significant proportion of students (35% of fourth-year undergraduates and 47% of graduate students) are in the crucial fourth phase of career decision-making. This phase is fundamental for students graduating and embarking on their career paths. The sixth phase, representing a completely determined choice, has been reached by only 15% of graduate-level respondents and 7% of fourth-year undergraduates.

**Table 5**

*Analysis of the Six-Phase Model of Career Decision-making questionnaire results*

| Career decision making phases | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** | **5** | **6** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N=310 | 5% | 15% | 16% | 39% | 16% | 9% |
| Third year (N=105) | 11% | 25% | 21% | 27% | 12% | 4% |
| Fourth year (N=110) | 5% | 16% | 24% | 35% | 13% | 7% |
| Masters student (N=95) | 1% | 5% | 8% | 47% | 24% | 15% |

*Note: the table was created by authors on the bases of experiment*.

The impetus for this study emanated from an examination of the operational dynamics of the Upgrade Center at Toraighyrov University. Notably, post-graduation, students exhibit a proclivity for swift job changes, and, at times, even shifts in their chosen occupations, prompting an inquiry into the magnitude of this issue. This concern spurred our investigation, aiming to assess the gravity of the problem and formulate effective strategies to bolster students' career development (Taylor et al., 2018). The scrutiny of the University Career Center's operations, coupled with the outcomes derived from the CDMDQ and the Six-Phase Model of Career Decision-making Questionnaire, has empowered us to propose avenues for elevating students' career development trajectory (Taylor et al., 2018).

Utilizing the CDMDQ, we pinpointed specific domains necessitating cultivation through career support courses. It is evident that students either lack pertinent information or lack the proficiency to analyze and apply the information available to them regarding their future careers or professions. Consequently, internal impediments manifest among students, encompassing challenges in self-awareness and comprehension of their needs, strengths, and weaknesses (De Vos et al., 2021). Employing the Six-Phase Model of Career Decision-making Questionnaire, we observed that a majority of students in their final year of undergraduate studies possess foundational competencies in career planning but lack the skills requisite for lifelong career self-management. These revelations underscore the exigency for the development of a specialized career course aimed at honing career decision-making competencies among students. Such a course should be tailored to assist students in navigating opportunities within their prospective vocational domains.

Furthermore, we advocate for the augmentation of career counseling practices within the university. Individualized sessions should primarily concentrate on assisting students in delineating their strengths and weaknesses, as well as charting their intended career trajectories. It is imperative to instill in students lifelong skills that can be harnessed for job seeking and navigating career transitions. The prevalence of senior and graduate students equipped with advanced career planning skills would undoubtedly surge if student support were calibrated toward cultivating competencies integral to career decision-making. This pivotal period signifies when a substantial cohort of students should ideally possess a lucid understanding of their intended pursuits within the vocational realm and be poised for decisive career choices.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the investigation into the career development landscape at Toraighyrov University, prompted by observations at the Upgrade Center, has unearthed crucial insights. The propensity of students to undergo rapid job changes following graduation highlighted a significant concern, prompting a comprehensive examination of the issue. The deployment of tools such as the CDMDQ and the Six-Phase Model of Career Decision-making Questionnaire has been instrumental in identifying specific challenges faced by students.

The findings underscore the imperative of tailored interventions to enhance students' career development. The identified gaps, including a lack of information utilization skills and challenges in self-awareness, necessitate focused attention. The proposition for a specialized career course geared towards fortifying career decision-making competencies among students is grounded in addressing these specific needs. By cultivating skills related to information analysis, self-awareness, and strategic career planning, such a course aims to empower students for a lifetime of effective career self-management.

Additionally, the recommendation to augment career counseling practices within the university aligns with the identified challenges. One-on-one sessions focusing on students' understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, coupled with guidance on intended career paths, emerge as crucial. The envisioned approach seeks to equip students with essential

lifelong skills, ensuring their preparedness for job-seeking and adept handling of career transitions.

Ultimately, the proposed interventions aspire to elevate the overall level of career readiness among students. By addressing the root causes of career decision-making difficulties and providing targeted support, Toraighyrov University can better position its students for success in their chosen vocations. This strategic approach not only seeks to mitigate the observed challenges but also aims to foster a proactive and empowered student body capable of making informed and confident career decisions throughout their professional journeys.

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