

An In-Depth Analysis on Educational and Career Goals



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Declaration

I hereby declare that except where specific reference is made to the work of others, the contents of this report are original and have not been submitted in whole or in part for consideration for any other degree or qualification in this or any other university. This report is my own work and contains nothing that is the outcome of work done in collaboration with others except as specified in the text and Acknowledgements.

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I am immensely grateful to my teammates for their cooperation, dedication, and commitment. Each member's unique contribution played a significant role in the success of this project.

Lastly, I sincerely appreciate the efforts of all the respondents who participated in our survey. Their input provided us with valuable insights that enriched our analysis and findings.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of this endeavor.

Abstract

This report analyzes the factors influencing education and career choices among students, with a specific focus on gender-based trends, skill alignment, confidence levels, and future aspirations. The study employed a structured survey to collect data from participants, examining key aspects such as career influence, preferred career paths, intentions to pursue further education, and alignment of skills with their chosen degree.

The survey was conducted using google forms and the analysis was done with the help of various functionalities of Microsoft Excel such as formulas, tables and charts. This report highlights critical insights into the educational and professional decision-making process of students, offering valuable recommendations for targeted skill-building programs, career counseling initiatives, and strategies to bridge the gap between education and employability.

Table of Contents

List of Figures	vii
List of Tables	viii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Objective	1
1.2 Contribution.....	2
2 Data Organization	3
2.1 Data Description.....	3
2.2 Technical Description	8
2.3 Work Flow Diagram:	12
3 Data Analysis	14
3.1 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Skill Alignment with Current Degree	14
3.2 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Active development of skills outside curriculum.....	16
3.3 Exploring the correlation between Skill & Personal Interest.....	18
3.4 Exploring the Correlation Between Confidence & Skill.....	19
3.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.	21
3.6 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and External Influence on Choice of Degree	24
3.7 Exploring the Correlation Between Confidence and Personal Interest	26
3.8 Functions used:.....	28

4 Inferences & Key Insights	31
4.1 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Skill Alignment with Current Degree	31
4.2 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Active development of skills outside curriculum.....	32
4.3 Exploring the correlation between Skill & Personal Interest.....	33
4.4 Exploring the Correlation Between Confidence & Skill.....	34
4.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.	37
4.6 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and External Influence on Choice of Degree	41
4.7 Exploring the Correlation Between Confidence and Personal Interest	44
5 Conclusion	47
6 References	48

List of Figures

Figure Number	Figure Name	Page Number
1	Work-Flow-Diagram	13
2	Gender-Skill_Development-Bar_Chart	17
3	Gender-Skill_Alignment-Column_Chart	19
4	Confidence-Skill-Line_Chart	22
5	Gender-Work_Field-Column_Chart	24
6	Gender-Higher_Education -Column_Chart	24
7	Gender-Degree_Choices-Stacked_Bar_Chart	17
8	Personal_Interest-Confidence-Line_Chart	29
9	Gender-Skill_Development-Bar_Chart-Inference	33
10	Gender-Skill_Alignment-Column_Chart-Inference	34
11	Confidence-Skill-Line_Chart	36
12	Gender-Work_Field-Column_Chart-Inference	39
13	Gender-Higher_Education -Column_Chart-Inference	39
14	Gender-Degree_Choices-Stacked_Bar_Chart-Inference	43
15	Personal_Interest-Confidence-Line_Chart-Inference	46

List of Tables

Table Number	Table Name	Page Number
1	Gender-Skill_Development	16
2	Gender-Skill_Alignment	18
3	Confidence-Skill_Alignment	21
4	Gender-Work_Field	23
5	Gender-Degree_Choices	26
6	Confidence-Personal_Interest	28
7	Skill-Personal_Interest	35

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Objective

Education and career choices are pivotal decisions that shape an individual's future, reflecting a blend of personal aspirations, societal influences, and skill sets. This report delves into the factors that influence these decisions among students, with a particular emphasis on gender-based trends, skill alignment, confidence levels, and long-term aspirations. By understanding these dynamics, we can uncover patterns and challenges that affect students' paths towards higher education and professional success. This report presents key findings that shed light on the educational and professional decision-making processes of students. It provides actionable recommendations to foster targeted skill-building programs, counseling initiatives, and address the critical gap between education and employability, ensuring that students are better prepared to achieve their aspirations in a competitive and evolving world.

1.2 Contribution

As a member of the team, I was responsible for examining gender based trends on external influence on choice of degree. I categorized the survey responses by gender and created visual representations with stacked bar charts to compare trends. Furthermore, I conducted a correlation analysis between confidence level and personal interest, providing insights into how personal interest in the degree affects confidence levels of students. These contributions helped uncover the importance of aligning personal interest with educational choices to build confidence in career aspirations.

Chapter 2

Data Organization

2.1 Data Description

The data collected in this study is based on a structured survey designed to explore factors influencing students' education and career choices. The dataset comprises responses to 20 multiple-choice and scale-based questions, capturing demographic details, motivational factors, skill alignment, and career aspirations. Below is a breakdown of the data:

2.1.1 Demographics:

- **Name:** Open-ended input capturing the respondent's name (optional, depending on anonymity settings).
- **Gender:** Categorical variable with options (*Male, Female, prefer not to say*).
- **Age:** Numerical data capturing the respondent's age.

2.1.2 Degree Choice Influences:

- **Primary Influence:** Multiple-choice responses identifying the most significant factor influencing the degree choice (e.g., *Passion for the subject, Career opportunities*).
- **Personal Interest:** Binary choice (*Yes, No*) indicating whether the choice was based on personal interest.
- **Job Market Impact:** Likert-scale variable assessing the degree of influence from job market demand (*Very much, Somewhat, Not at all*).
- **Recommendations:** Binary choice (*Yes, No*) indicating whether recommendations from others influenced the decision.
- **Alternative Consideration:** Binary choice (*Yes, No*) indicating if the respondent considered other degree programs.

2.1.3 Skill Alignment and Development:

- **Skill Alignment:** Responses to whether the respondent's skills align with their degree (*Yes, No, Somewhat*).
- **Skill Development:** Binary choice (*Yes, No*) indicating active engagement in skill development activities outside the curriculum.
 - **Extracurricular Participation:** Frequency scale (*Regularly, Occasionally, not at all*) regarding participation in field-related activities.

2.1.4 Career Confidence and Aspirations:

- **Confidence in Employment:** A 5-point Likert scale (1 – *Not confident at all* to 5 – *Very confident*) measuring employment confidence.
- **Preferred Career Path:** Categorical data indicating post-graduation plans (e.g., *Employment, Entrepreneurship, Further education*).
- **Field Alignment:** Multiple-choice (*Yes, No, Maybe*) indicating plans to work in the same field as the degree.
- **Work Location Preference:** Categorical variable capturing preference for post-graduation work location (*Home country, Abroad, No preference*).
- **Further Education Plans:** Multiple-choice (*Yes, No, Maybe*) capturing intentions to pursue further education.

2.1.5 Influences and Career Priorities:

- **Biggest Career Influence:** Multiple-choice identifying the primary influence on career goals (e.g., *Family, Professors, Friends, Media, Self*).
- **Work-Life Balance Importance:** Likert scale (*1 – Not important to 5 – Very important*) assessing the priority of work-life balance.
- **Degree Preparation:** Responses on whether the degree prepares them for their career (*Yes, No, Somewhat*).
- **Career Goal Confidence:** A 5-point Likert scale measuring confidence in achieving career goals.

Key Features:

- **Question Format:** Predominantly multiple-choice and Likert scale questions for quantitative analysis, with 2 open-ended fields (Name and Age).
- **Focus Areas:** This dataset addresses personal, academic, and career-oriented aspects, making it ideal for analyzing trends in education and career decision-making.

2.2 Technical Description

This survey data was collected and analyzed using structured techniques to ensure accuracy and relevance. Below is a detailed technical description, highlighting the use of pivot tables for advanced data analysis.

2.2.1 Data Collection Methodology

- **Survey Platform:**

The data was collected using Google Forms, a user-friendly online platform for creating structured questionnaires with a variety of response formats (e.g., multiple-choice, Likert scale, and open-ended).

- **Question Design:**

- The survey contained 20 questions designed to capture demographic information, educational influences, career aspirations, skill alignment, and confidence levels.
- Responses were designed to generate both categorical data (e.g., gender, career influence) and ordinal data (e.g., Likert-scale questions measuring confidence or importance).

- **Target Audience:**

- The survey targeted students, aiming to uncover patterns in educational choices and career planning.

2.2.2 Data Processing Tools

- **Platform for Analysis:**

The data collected via Google Forms was exported to **Microsoft Excel** for organization, cleaning, and analysis.

- **Data Cleaning and Preparation:**

- Raw data was reviewed to identify and remove incomplete or invalid responses.
- Data was organized into structured tables, where each row represents a respondent and each column represents a survey question

2.2.3 Data Analysis Techniques

- **Statistical Tools Used:**

Various functionalities in **Microsoft Excel** were leveraged, including:

- **Formulas:** For aggregation and computation, such as calculating response frequencies, percentages, and averages.
- **Conditional Formatting:** To highlight patterns and trends in the data.
- **Charts and Graphs:** Used for visualizing key findings:
 - **Bar charts** to represent career influences and field alignment.
 - **Pie charts** for proportions, such as confidence in job preparedness.
 - **Line charts** for trends in ordinal data, such as confidence ratings or importance of work-life balance.
- **Pivot Tables for Advanced Analysis:**
 - **Data Aggregation:** Pivot tables were used to summarize large datasets efficiently, allowing for quick computation of totals, averages, and percentages.
 - **Cross-tabulation:** Relationships between variables were explored, such as:
 - Comparing gender with degree influence factors.
 - Analyzing the correlation between confidence in employment and skill alignment.
 - **Dynamic Filtering:** Enabled the examination of specific subsets of data, such as responses from students considering further education or those preferring work abroad.

2.2.4 Output Presentation

- **Visualization:**

- The processed data is represented through clear, visually appealing charts and graphs, providing insights into:
 - Influences on career and education choices.
 - Patterns in confidence, skill development, and aspirations.

2.3 Work Flow Diagram:

The workflow diagram presented in this report illustrates the step-by-step process followed in the collection, analysis, and interpretation of survey data. It provides a visual representation of the sequence of tasks, tools, and methods used from the initial survey creation to the final reporting of findings. The diagram outlines the logical flow of the entire process, ensuring clarity in the approach taken to gather insights into the factors influencing students' education and career choices.

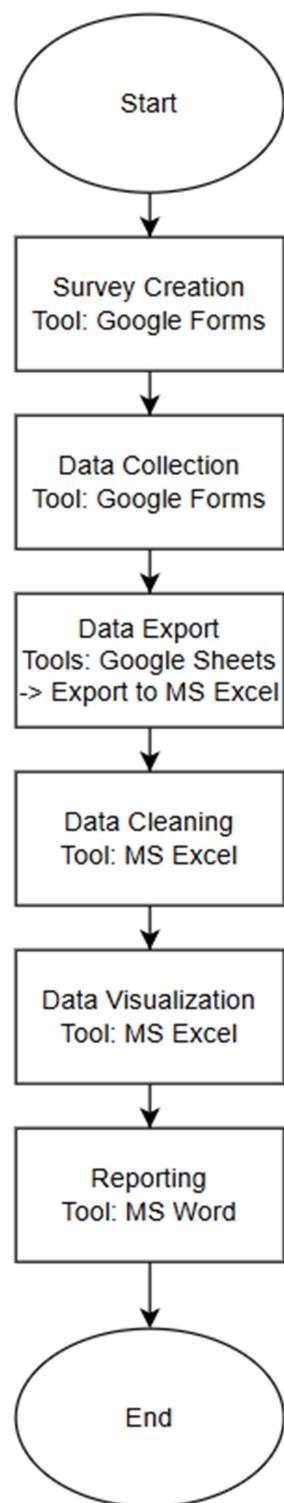


Figure 1

Chapter 3

Data Analysis

3.1 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Skill Alignment with Current Degree

This section examines the relationship between gender and students' perceptions of how well their skills align with their current academic degree. By analyzing responses from male and female participants, it aims to identify any significant differences or trends, providing insights into how gender may influence perceptions of academic and personal skill compatibility. Among females, 40.91% feel their skills align with their current degree, while 59.09% disagree. Among males, 47.06% feel aligned, but 52.94% disagree. Overall, more people disagree (55.36%) than agree (44.64%), indicating a significant perception of misalignment.

Are you actively developing skills outside of your curriculum (e.g., internships, online courses)?	What is your gender?	Count of What is your gender?
Agree	Female	16.07%
	Male	28.57%
Agree Total		44.64%
Disagree	Female	23.21%
	Male	32.14%
Disagree Total		55.36%
Grand Total		100.00%

Table 1

3.1 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Skill Alignment with Current Degree

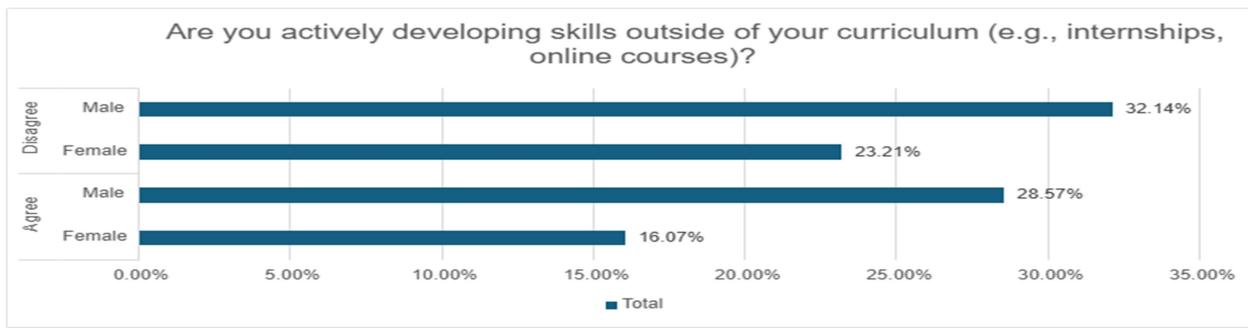


Figure 2

Pivot tables simplify the aggregation of categorical data, allowing for clear segmentation (e.g., agreement by gender).

Bar graphs are ideal for visualizing trends across groups, such as gender-specific agreement levels.

A clustered bar chart displays groups (or clusters) of bars for different categories side by side. Each cluster represents a primary category (e.g., gender), and the bars within the cluster represent subcategories (e.g., "Agree," "Disagree," "Neutral").

3.2 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Active development of skills outside curriculum

3.2 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Active development of skills outside curriculum

This section investigates the relationship between gender and students' engagement in developing skills outside their academic curriculum. It analyzes trends among male and female participants to understand their motivation, participation in extracurricular skill-building activities, and any gender-specific differences in proactive self-improvement efforts.

Only 27.27% of females and 47.06% of males are actively developing skills outside the curriculum. Most females (54.55%) and a notable portion of males (44.12%) remain neutral, suggesting indecisiveness or lack of engagement. Disagreement levels are lower overall (12.50%), but females (18.18%) show higher disagreement compared to males (8.82%).

What is your gender?	Do you feel your skills align with your current degree?	Count of Do you feel your skills align with your current degree?
Female	Agree	10.71%
	Disagree	7.14%
	Neutral	21.43%
Female Total		39.29%
Male	Agree	28.57%
	Disagree	5.36%
	Neutral	26.79%
Male Total		60.71%
Grand Total		100.00%

Table 2

3.3 Exploring the correlation between Skill & Personal Interest

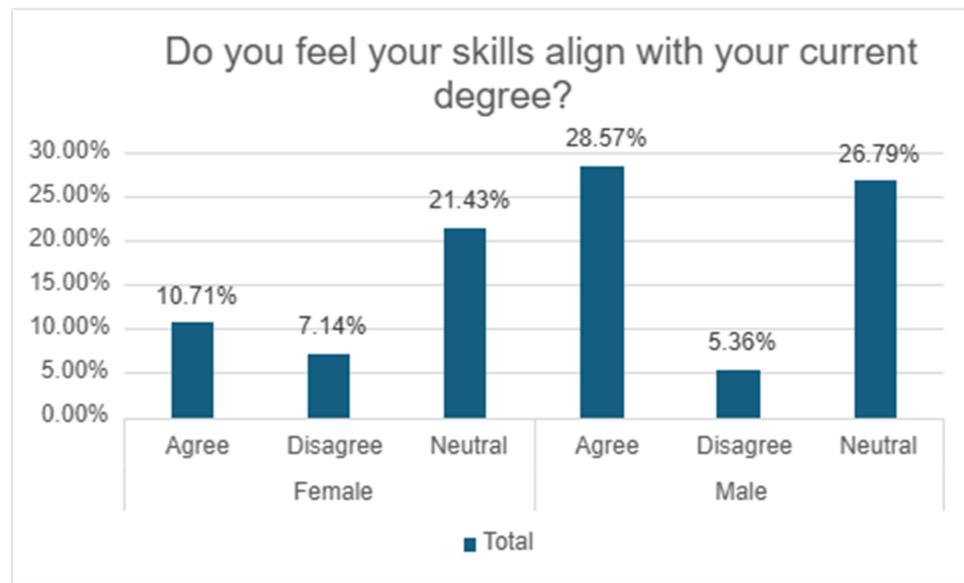


Figure 3

Pivot tables simplify the aggregation of categorical data, allowing for clear segmentation (e.g., agreement by gender).

The clustered column chart was because of its effectiveness in visualizing and comparing categorical data across multiple groups.

3.3 Exploring the correlation between Skill & Personal Interest

This section delves into the relationship between students' perceived alignment of their skills with their academic degree and their personal interest in skill development. By examining the interplay between these factors, the analysis aims to uncover whether alignment with one's degree influences the motivation to pursue additional skills, highlighting the connection between academic relevance and personal growth initiatives.

There is a moderate positive correlation between skill alignment and active skill development. However, the high neutrality response for indicates that alignment with the degree does not consistently translate to action, highlighting a gap between perception and behavior.

Agreement Across Both Questions:

People who feel their skills align with their degree are moderately more likely to develop skills outside the curriculum.

Among males, 47.06% agree on both questions, while females show a drop from 40.91% to 27.27%.

Neutral and Disagreement Trends:

A high percentage (48.21%) of people remain neutral on, even when they agree. This suggests that alignment with the degree does not always motivate action toward skill development.

Gender Comparison:

Males show higher engagement in both alignment and skill development.

Females exhibit a stronger tendency toward neutrality or disagreement in skill development, indicating potential barriers such as lack of confidence, access, or interest.

3.4 Exploring the Correlation Between Confidence & Skill

This section examines the relationship between students' confidence levels and the alignment of their skills with their current degree. The goal is to determine how skill alignment impacts students' confidence in gaining employment in their field after graduation and achieving their overall career goals.

The analysis categorizes students into three groups based on their reported skill alignment ("Yes", "Somewhat" and "No") and compares their confidence levels. This allows us to identify trends and insights into how perceived skill readiness influences career confidence.

To explore this topic, the following questions from the survey were tackled:

- Do you feel your skills align with your current degree?
- How confident are you in gaining employment in your field after graduation?
- How confident are you about achieving your career goals?

The responses recorded were summarized as follows:

Confidence	Do you feel your skills align with your current degree? YES	Do you feel your skills align with your current degree? SOMEWHAT	Do you feel your skills align with your current degree? NO
5	0	1	1
6	1	8	1
7	1	9	2
8	3	3	0
9	7	4	1
10	10	2	2

Table 3

Firstly, the confidence level of each respondent regarding gaining employment and achieving career goals was summed up and stored in a different column.

This table was created using the following functions:

- UNIQUE [=UNIQUE(G2:G57)]
- SORT (=SORT(UNIQUE(G2:G57)))
- COUNTIFS [=COUNTIFS(\$G\$2:\$G\$57, \$I2, \$D\$2:\$D\$57, "Yes")]

The **UNIQUE** function is used to generate a column containing the unique confidence values of responses, this column was later sorted in ascending order with the help of the **SORT** function.

The **COUNTIFS** function is used here as it applies criteria to cells across multiple ranges and counts the number of times all criteria are met. This allows us to count responses which fulfill multiple criteria, which are in this case gender and response type.



Figure 4

The Table was then visualized with the help of a **Line Chart**.

This particular chart was used so it would be easy to visualize the change in responses as the confidence level varies. Line graphs are a powerful tool to analyze continuous data in a very simplistic manner.

3.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.

3.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.

This section analyzes the relationship between gender and the students' decisions regarding their educational and career aspirations, specifically focusing on two aspects, their interest in pursuing further education after completing their current degree and their intent to work in the same field as their current degree.

The analysis categorizes students into three groups based on their interest in pursuing further education ("Yes", "Maybe" and "No") and their intent to work in the same field ("Yes", "Maybe" and "No"). This allows us to identify trends and insights into how gender influences their interest in further education and intent to work in same field.

To explore this topic, the following questions from the survey were tackled:

- Do you plan to work in the same field as your degree?
- Do you intend to pursue further education

Gender	Do you plan to work in the same field as your degree? YES	Do you plan to work in the same field as your degree? NO	Do you plan to work in the same field as your degree? MAYBE	Do you intend to pursue further education? Yes	Do you intend to pursue further education? Maybe	Do you intend to pursue further education? No
Male	12	14	8	16	14	4
Female	14	8	0	14	8	0

Table 4

The formula used to calculate data in this table is

- **COUNTIFS** [=COUNTIFS(\$B\$2:\$B\$57, "Yes", \$A\$2:\$A\$57, \$M2)]

The rest of the table was completed using the auto-fill feature

The **COUNTIFS** function is used here as it applies criteria to cells across multiple ranges and counts the number of times all criteria are met. This allows us to count responses which fulfill multiple criteria, which are in this case gender and response type.

3.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.

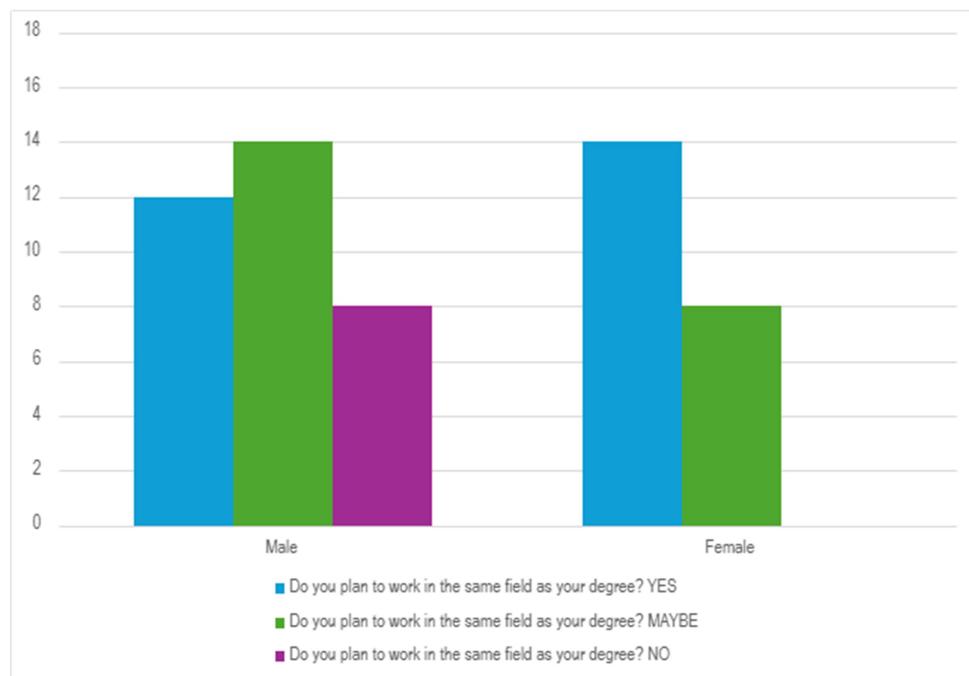


Figure 5

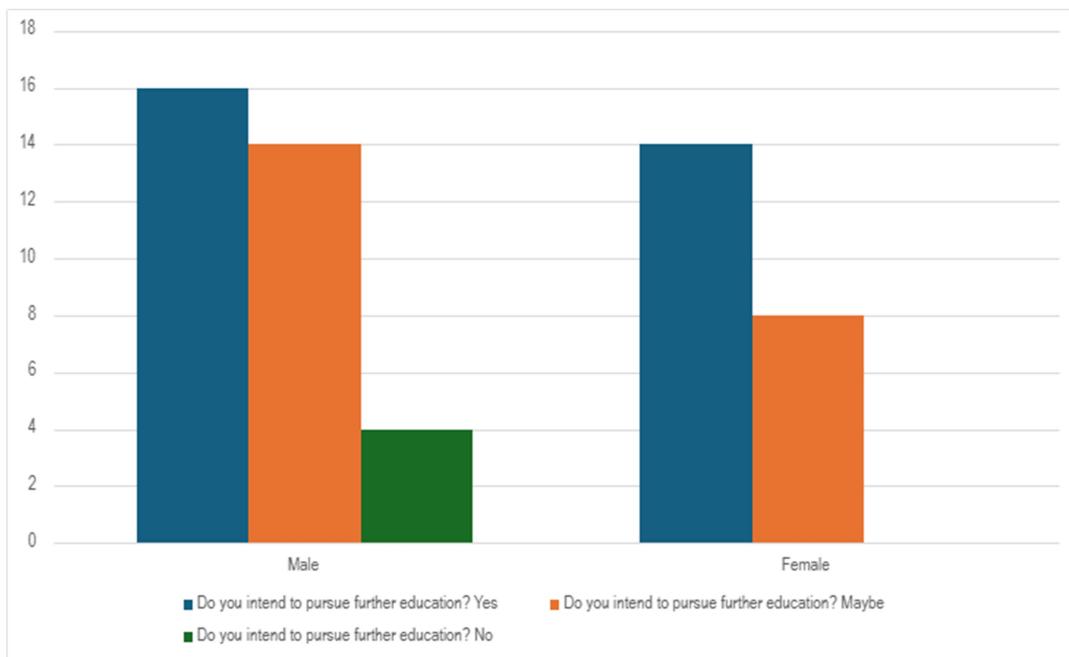


Figure 6

3.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.

The **clustered column chart** type was chosen for both charts because it provides a clear and intuitive way to compare values across different categories, making the data easier to interpret.

3.6 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and External Influence on Choice of Degree

3.6 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and External Influence on Choice of Degree

This topic explores how gender influences the degree to which external factors impact students' choice of degree programs. By analyzing survey data, the study aims to identify any significant gender-based differences in how external influences shape academic decisions, providing insights into the role of gender in educational choices and the potential need for targeted support in career counseling.

To explore this topic, the following questions from the survey were tackled:

- Was your degree choice influenced by recommendations from others?
- Did you consider any alternative degree programs?

The responses for these questions were summarized in a table using formulas:

Gender	Was your degree choice influenced by recommendations from others?	Was your degree choice influenced by recommendations from others? YES	Did you consider any alternative degree programs?	Did you consider any alternative degree programs? YES	Did you consider any alternative degree programs? NO
	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
Male		13	21	16	18
Female		13	9	13	9

Table 5

Only 1 formula was required to create this table with the help of the autofill feature. The formula is **COUNTIFS** [=COUNTIFS(\$A\$2:\$A\$57, \$H2, \$B\$2:\$B\$57, "Yes")]

The **COUNTIFS** function is used here as it applies criteria to cells across multiple ranges and counts the number of times all criteria are met. This allows us to count responses which fulfill multiple criteria, which are in this case gender and response type.

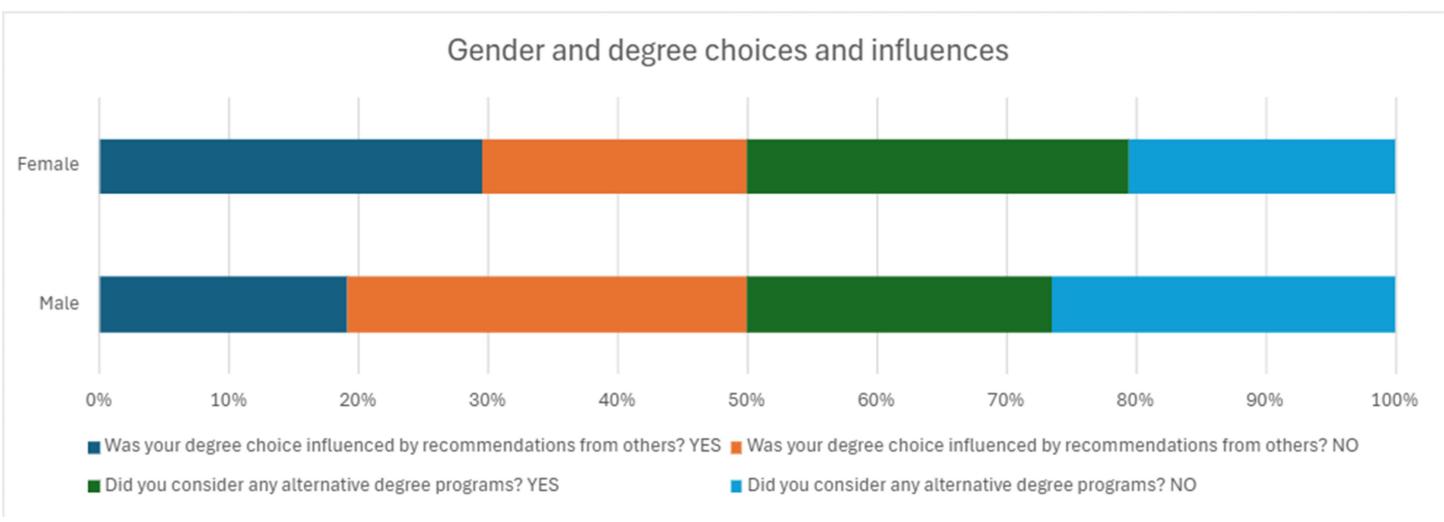


Figure 7

The Table was then visualized with the help of a **100% stacked bar chart**. This particular chart was used so it would be easier to visualize and compare the ratios of responses of each gender as comparing counts using a clustered chart would be less helpful due to the uneven distribution of male and female responses.

3.7 Exploring the Correlation Between Confidence and Personal Interest

This topic examines how students' personal interest in their chosen degree program influences their confidence in achieving career goals and succeeding in their field of study. By analyzing survey data, this study seeks to identify any significant relationships between a student's level of interest in their subject and their self-assurance regarding future career prospects. The findings can provide insights into the importance of passion and personal motivation in fostering confidence, which may inform strategies for improving student engagement and career readiness.

To explore this topic, the following questions from the survey were tackled:

- How confident are you in gaining employment in your field after graduation?
- How confident are you about achieving your career goals?
- Did you choose this degree based on personal interest?

The responses for these questions were summarized in a table using various formulas:

CONFIDENCE LEVEL	Did you choose this degree based on personal interest? YES	Did you choose this degree based on personal interest? NO
5	2	0
6	6	4
7	7	5
8	5	1
9	10	2
10	14	0

Table 6

The Confidence Levels of responses were calculated by adding the corresponding values of the 2 confidence-based questions to get a value on a scale of 1-10
 3 formulas were required to create this table with the help of the autofill feature. The formulas are:

- **UNIQUE** [UNIQUE(M2:M57)]
- **SORT** [=SORT(UNIQUE(M2:M57))]

- **COUNTIFS** [=COUNTIFS(M\$2:M\$57, N2, F\$2:F\$57, "Yes")]

The **UNIQUE** function is used to generate a column containing the unique confidence values of responses, this column was later sorted in ascending order with the help of the **SORT** function.

The **COUNTIFS** function is used here as it applies criteria to cells across multiple ranges and counts the number of times all criteria are met. This allows us to count responses which fulfill multiple criteria, which are in this case gender and response type.

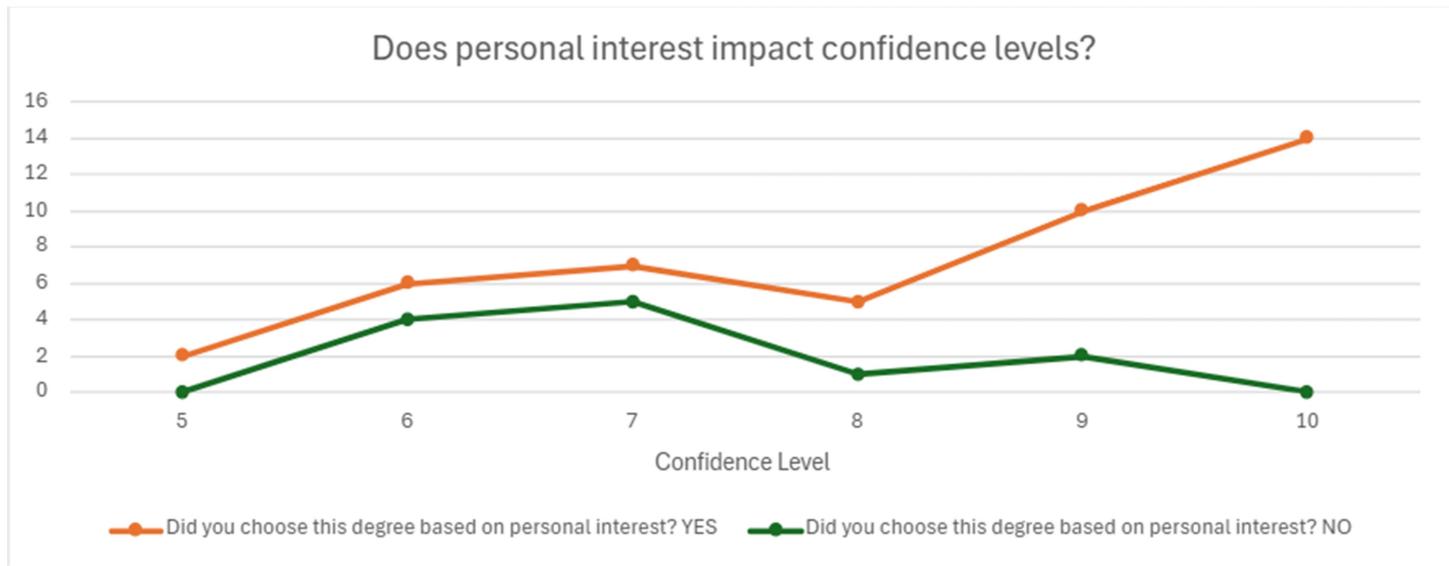


Figure 8

The Table was then visualized with the help of a **Line Chart**.

This particular chart was used so it would be easy to visualize the change in responses as the confidence level varies. Line graphs are a powerful tool to analyze continuous data in a very simplistic manner.

3.8 Functions used:

3.8.1 COUNTIFS

The **COUNTIFS** function applies criteria to cells across multiple ranges and counts the number of times all criteria are met

Syntax:

`COUNTIFS(criteria_range1, criteria1, [criteria_range2, criteria2]...)`

The **COUNTIFS** function syntax has the following arguments:

criteria_range1 (Required): The first range in which to evaluate the associated criteria.

criteria1 (Required): The criteria in the form of a number, expression, cell reference, or text that define which cells will be counted. For example, criteria can be expressed as 32, ">32", B4, "apples", or "32".

criteria_range2, criteria2, ... (Optional): Additional ranges and their associated criteria. Up to 127 range/criteria pairs are allowed. [1]

3.8.2 SORT

SORT returns a sorted array of the elements in an array. The returned array is the same shape as the provided array argument.

Syntax:

=SORT(array,[sort_index],[sort_order],[by_col])

Range (Required): The range, or array to sort

[sort_index] (Optional): A number indicating the row or column to sort by

[sort_order] (Optional): A number indicating the desired sort order; 1 for ascending order (default), -1 for descending order

[by_col] (Optional): A logical value indicating the desired sort direction; FALSE to sort by row (default), TRUE to sort by column. [2]

3.8.3 UNIQUE

The UNIQUE function returns a list of unique values in a list or range

Syntax:

=UNIQUE(array,[by_col],[exactly_once])

array (Required): The range or array from which to return unique rows or columns

[by_col] (Optional): The by_col argument is a logical value indicating how to compare.

- **TRUE** will compare columns against each other and return the unique columns
- **FALSE** (or omitted) will compare rows against each other and return the unique rows

[exactly_once] (Optional): The exactly_once argument is a logical value that will return rows or columns that occur exactly once in the range or array. This is the database concept of unique.

- **TRUE** will return all distinct rows or columns that occur exactly once from the range or array
- **FALSE** (or omitted) will return all distinct rows or columns from the range or array. [3]

Chapter 4

Inferences & Key Insights

4.1 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Skill Alignment with Current Degree

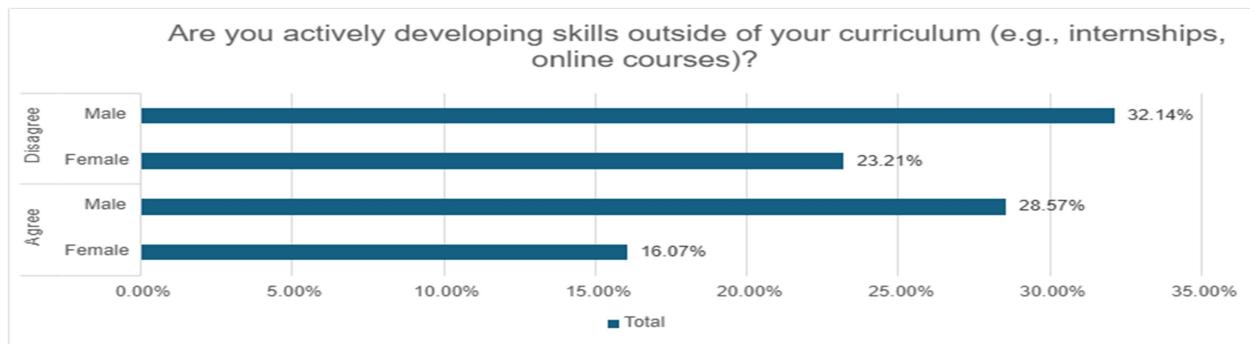


Figure 9

This analysis reveals that females are more likely to perceive a misalignment between their skills and their degree compared to males. This suggests that females may experience greater uncertainty or dissatisfaction with their academic path, potentially signaling a need for tailored academic or career guidance.

4.2 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender and Active development of skills outside curriculum

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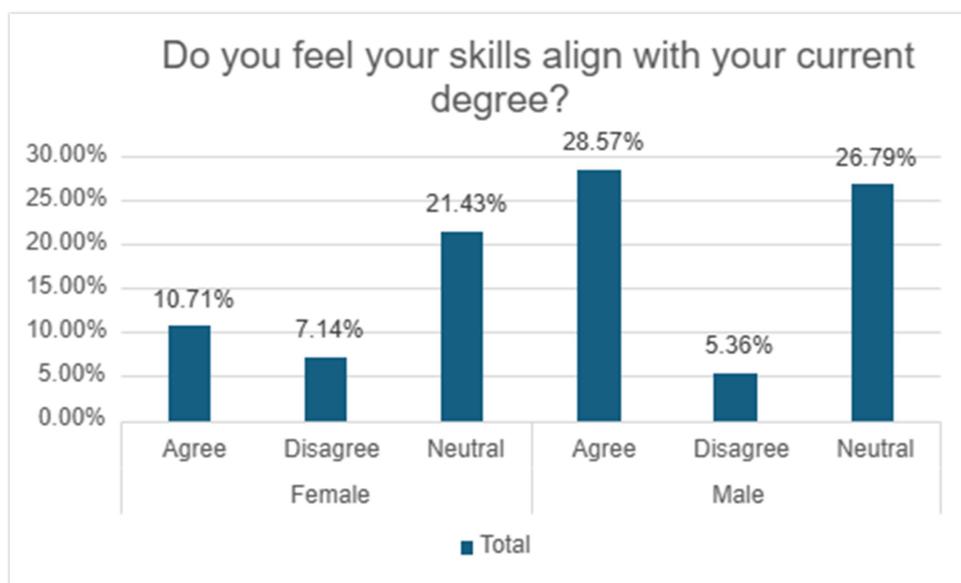


Figure 10

Males demonstrate a stronger tendency to actively pursue skill development opportunities, reflecting higher confidence or motivation to engage in extracurricular activities. Females, however, show higher neutrality, indicating hesitancy or a lack of access to relevant opportunities, which could benefit from targeted interventions.

4.3 Exploring the correlation between Skill & Personal Interest

Count of Did you choose this degree based on personal interest?	Did you choose this degree based on personal interest?		
Do you feel your skills align with your current degree?	Agree	Disagree	Grand Total
Agree	22		22
Disagree	5	2	7
Neutral	17	10	27
Grand Total	44	12	56

Table 7

The data highlights that alignment with a degree increases the likelihood of proactive skill development. However, the high level of neutrality among respondents suggests that personal interest alone may not suffice to drive action, underscoring the importance of institutional encouragement and support.

4.4 Exploring the Correlation Between Confidence & Skill



Figure 11

4.4.1 Confidence in Gaining Employment

The data reveals a clear correlation between skill alignment and confidence in securing employment. Students who reported that their skills align with their degree (Yes) exhibited significantly higher levels of confidence in gaining employment. These respondents rated their confidence, on average, at around 4.5/5. This suggests that when students feel prepared and equipped for the workforce, their confidence in securing a job is much higher.

In contrast, students who indicated "Somewhat" alignment displayed moderate confidence (around 3.8/5), reflecting a more cautious approach. Although these students felt they were somewhat ready for employment, they likely perceived gaps in their skills that led to a more reserved outlook on their job prospects.

Students who reported "No" alignment with their degree showed the lowest levels of confidence in gaining employment, with an average confidence rating of 2.5/5. This group's uncertainty about their skills likely contributed to a lower sense of preparedness, which is reflected in their diminished confidence levels.

4.4.2 Confidence in Achieving Career Goals

The pattern observed in confidence related to career goals mirrors the trend seen in employment confidence. Students who felt their skills aligned with their degree were significantly more confident in achieving their long-term career goals, with an average confidence rating of 4.6/5. These students believe that their educational background has equipped them with the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed in their chosen careers.

Those who indicated "Somewhat" alignment showed moderate confidence levels (4.0/5), again reflecting a certain level of optimism despite recognizing that there might be gaps in their skills. These students likely believe they can still achieve their career goals, albeit with some additional effort or training.

Students with "No" skill alignment displayed the lowest confidence in achieving their career goals, with an average rating of 3.0/5. This group likely feels that their lack of alignment between their degree and skills might hinder their ability to reach their career aspirations.

4.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.

4.4.3 Insights

The analysis clearly demonstrates a positive correlation between skill alignment and confidence levels. Students who feel their skills align with their degree are significantly more confident in both securing employment and achieving their long-term career goals. In contrast, those with partial or no skill alignment show reduced confidence, highlighting the importance of skills that directly correspond to career expectations.

4.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.

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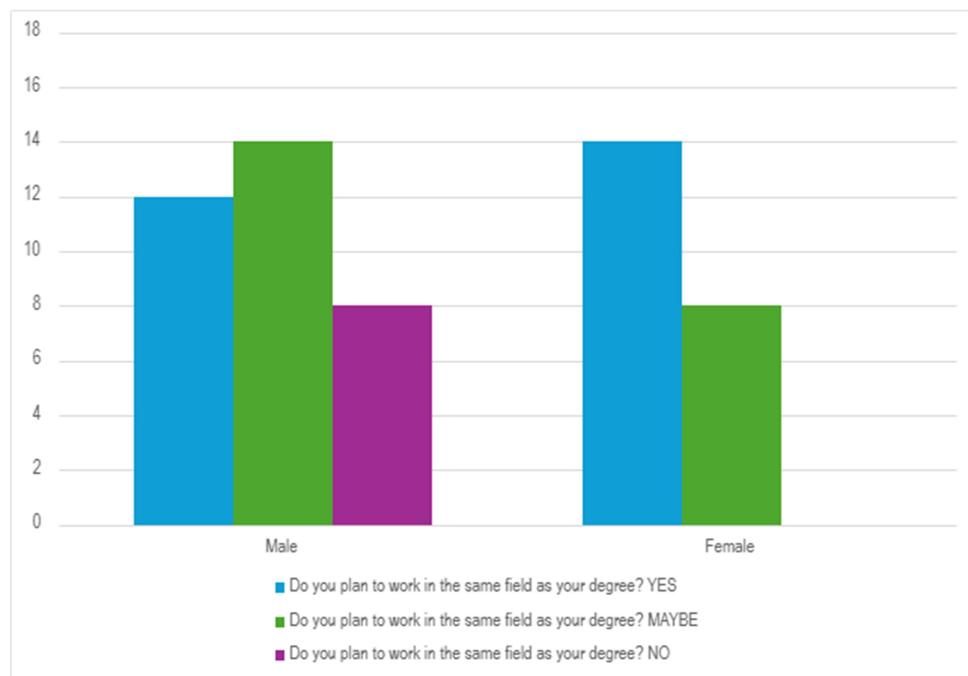


Figure 12

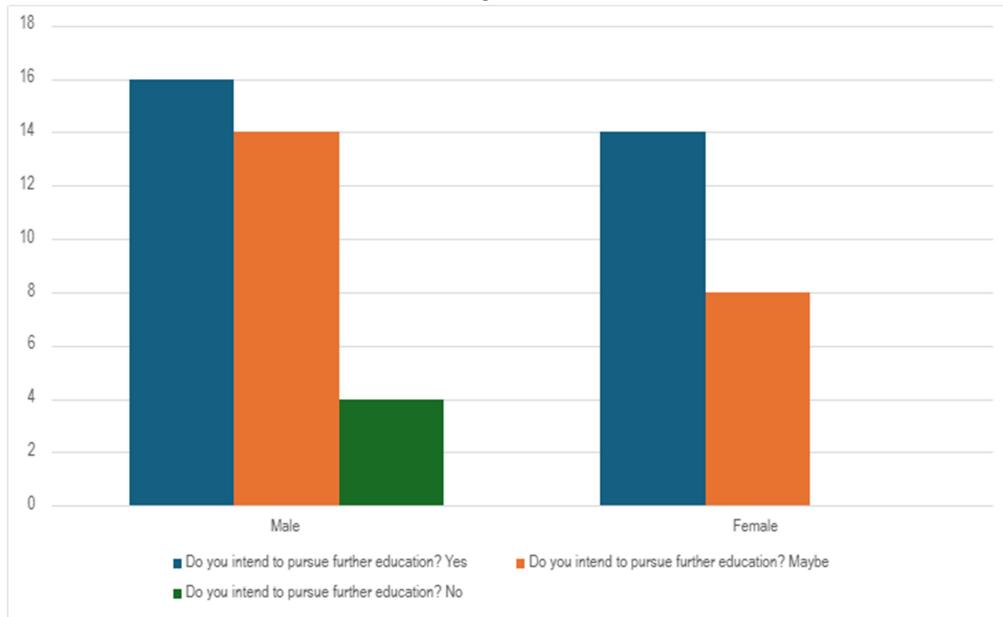


Figure 13

4.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.

4.5.1 Pursuing Further Education

The data reveals a distinct gender-based pattern in the decision to pursue further education. A greater proportion of female respondents expressed a definite interest in pursuing higher studies compared to their male counterparts. This trend indicates that females tend to view further education as an important step for career advancement or personal growth. On the other hand, males were more likely to respond with "Maybe" or "No," suggesting that they are relatively less inclined toward further academic pursuits. This may reflect an eagerness among male students to enter the workforce sooner or pursue alternative career pathways.

4.5 Exploring the Correlation Between Gender & Choice to pursue further education and work in the same field.

4.5.2 Working in the Same Field

When it comes to plans for working in the same field as their degree, the responses from both genders were more evenly distributed. However, females were slightly more likely to give a definitive "Yes" than males, demonstrating a stronger inclination to align their career with their educational background. Males, on the other hand, leaned more toward "Maybe," suggesting flexibility or uncertainty in committing to a career directly tied to their degree.

4.5.3 Insights

This analysis highlights key gender differences in career and educational priorities. Female respondents appear to adopt a more structured approach to their academic and professional goals, emphasizing further education and consistency in their field of study. In contrast, male respondents display greater openness to exploring diverse career paths or entering the job market without additional qualifications.

4.6 Exploring the Correlation between Gender and External Influence on Choice of Degree

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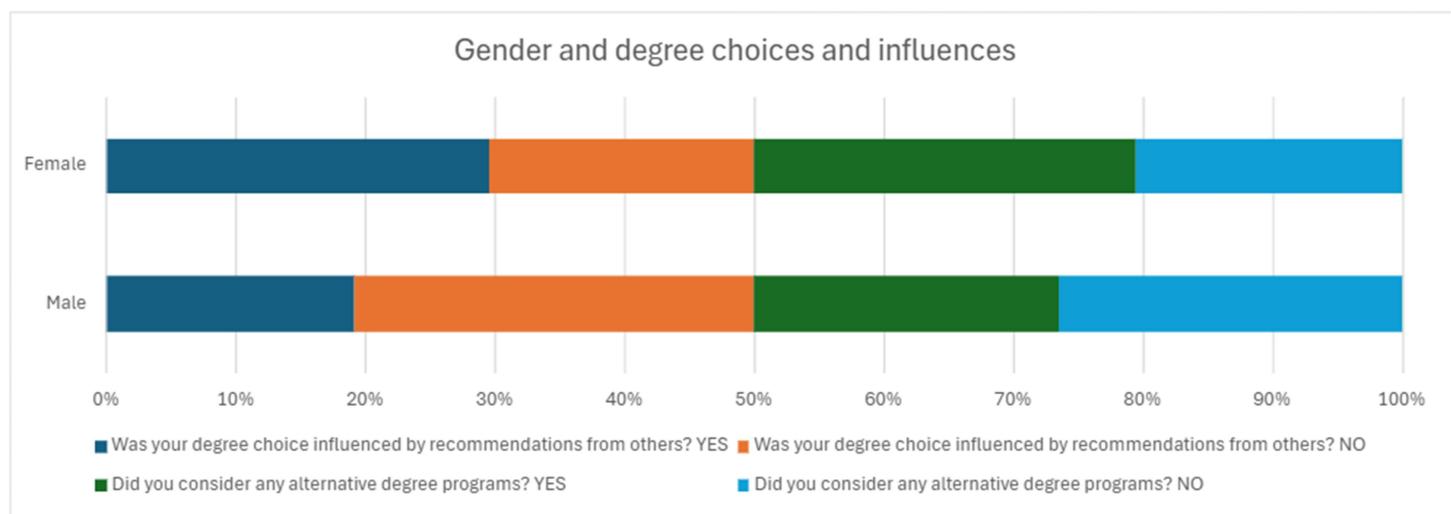


Figure 14

4.6.1 Influence of recommendations on degree choice

The data reveals a distinct gender-based pattern on the influence of others on degree choice. A greater proportion of female respondents were influenced by others in their degree choice. This trend indicates that females are more receptive of outside influence for their degree choice. On the other hand, males were more likely to respond with "No," suggesting that they are relatively less inclined to be influenced by recommendations.

4.6 Exploring the Correlation between Gender and External Influence on Choice of Degree

4.6.2 Consideration of alternative degree programs

When it comes to considering alternative degree programs, the responses follow the same trend as the earlier question. Female respondents were more likely to explore other options, suggesting greater openness or flexibility in their academic choices, possibly influenced by factors like career alignment or external guidance. Male respondents, in contrast, showed less inclination to reconsider their degree choices, indicating stronger confidence or commitment to their initial selection.

4.6.3 Insights

This analysis highlights key gender differences in career and educational priorities. Female respondents are more likely to be influenced by recommendations and show greater openness to considering alternative degree programs, reflecting flexibility and receptiveness to external input. In contrast, males are less influenced by recommendations and more committed to their initial choices, indicating confidence and independence in decision-making.

4.7 Exploring the Correlation between Confidence and Personal Interest

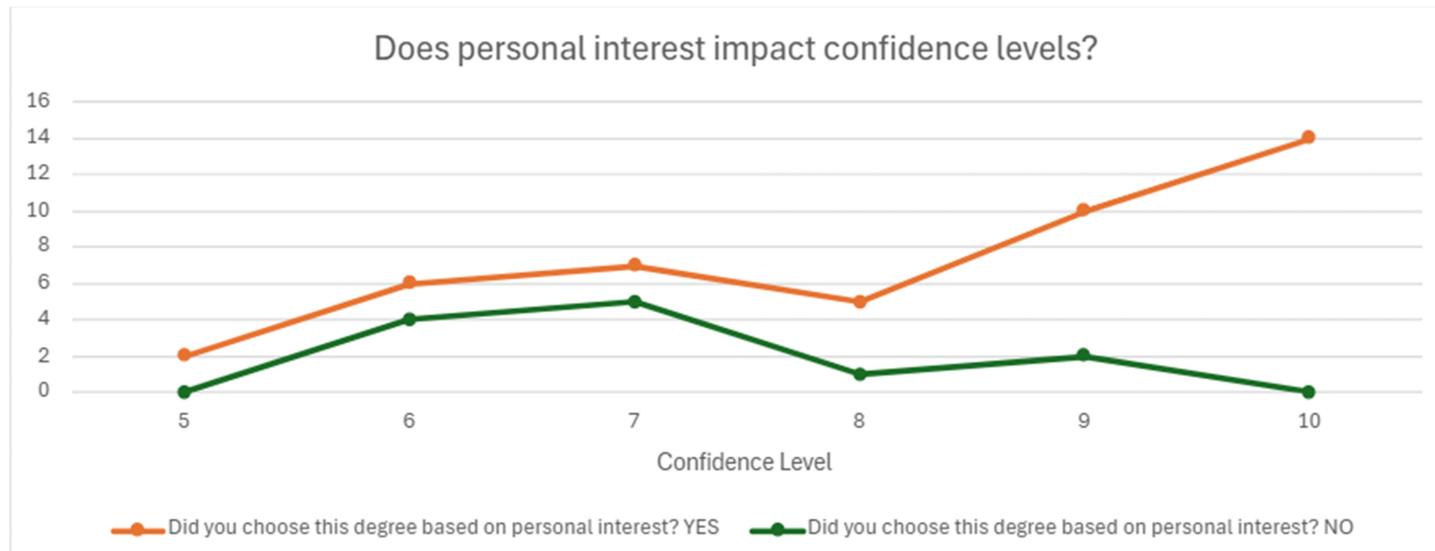


Figure 15

4.7.1 Confidence and personal Interest

The data suggests a strong correlation between confidence levels and choosing a degree based on personal interest. Respondents who selected their degree based on personal interest tend to exhibit higher confidence levels. For instance:

- At confidence levels **9 and 10**, a significant majority of students chose their degree based on personal interest (10 and 14 respondents, respectively), with few or no respondents who did not base their choice on personal interest.

Conversely, those who did not choose their degree based on personal interest generally report lower confidence levels. For example:

- At confidence levels **5 and 6**, no respondents or only a few (0 and 4, respectively) reported not basing their choice on personal interest.

This trend highlights the positive impact of aligning degree choices with personal interests on students' confidence in their academic and career paths. Encouraging

4.7 Exploring the Correlation between Confidence and Personal Interest

students to pursue degrees aligned with their passions could foster greater confidence and engagement.

4.7.2 Insights

Students who chose their degree based on personal interest exhibit higher confidence levels, particularly at levels 9 and 10. In contrast, those who did not base their choice on personal interest show lower confidence, with no respondents reaching the highest levels. This highlights the importance of aligning degree choices with personal passions to boost confidence and career assurance.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing students' educational and career decisions, emphasizing the role of gender, skill alignment, confidence levels, and personal interest. The findings reveal distinct gender-based trends, with female respondents showing greater receptiveness to external influences and a stronger inclination toward further education and aligning their career paths with their degree. In contrast, male respondents exhibit more independence in their decisions, greater confidence in their initial choices, and a willingness to explore diverse career paths.

Skill alignment emerged as a critical factor in building confidence, with students who felt their skills matched their degree exhibiting higher confidence in both employment prospects and achieving long-term career goals. Similarly, choosing a degree based on personal interest positively correlated with increased confidence, underscoring the importance of passion-driven decisions.

These findings highlight the need for targeted interventions, such as career counseling, skill development programs, and institutional support, to bridge gaps in skill alignment, boost confidence, and ensure students are well-prepared for future challenges. Tailored strategies, considering gender-specific preferences and challenges, can further enhance educational and professional outcomes, helping students navigate their academic and career journeys with greater assurance and success.

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