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An Enquiry into the Career and Specialisation Choices of Final Semester

MBA Students of Dublin Business School

Dissertation submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of

Business Administration [MBA General] at Dublin Business School

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Declaration

I, Abhijith Mathew, declare that this research is my original work and that it has never been presented to any institution or university for the award of Degree or Diploma. In addition, I have referenced correctly all literature and sources used in this work and this this work is fully compliant with the Dublin Business School's academic honesty policy.

Signed: 

Date: 07-01-2018

Acknowledgment

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Abstract

Background- The professional growth of the students is significantly affected by the career and specialisation choices during the master's degree. However, the career and specialisation choices of the final semester MBA students are affected by the various factors including individual and external factors. This research has a wider scope to gain comprehensive knowledge that useful for the students and the Universities to aid decision of career and specialisation change in the final semester of MBA.

Aim and Objectives- A detailed enquiry and investigation of the factors that influence choices of specialisation of final semester students of MBA at Dublin Business School is the research aim. The objectives were addressed in this research include specialisation choices of MBA for students' career and future jobs, a way of career choices at Dublin Business School, factors influencing the choices of specialisation of at Dublin Business School and lastly strategic solutions to aid in the right choices of MBA specialisation courses.

Research Questions- What are the key factors that influence the specialisation choices of the MBA students of the final year of Dublin Business School? And How MBA final semester students at Dublin Business School pursue specialisation and career choices?

Research Methodology- Semi-structured interview method was used under the qualitative and quantitative methodology to collect experience-based data of the final semester MBA students. Total 32 students were given questionnaire and interviewed to investigate the career and specialisation choices of the MBA field as per the academic performance, interest and job opportunities. Thematic analysis was conducted to address research objectives through interpretation of the key facts linked directly to the research problem.

Results and Findings- From the review of qualitative data, it has been inferred that career and specialisation choices of the students of MBA are not merely an own individual choice, while many factors are affecting their decision. The career and specialisation choices of a student are based on the academic performance and achievement, self-actualisation, financial status or financial aid, accessibility of assistance, family and relatives' suggestions or family support, seniors' feedback and job prospects and job security. At Dublin Business School, students have adopted career and specialisation choices in consideration for the various factors in respect of the career growth.

Conclusion: The students of final semester MBA are strategically conducted evaluation of career and specialisation choices in which interests in a subject and job prospects both are mainly given consideration to ensure personal and professional development.

Key Words: Career and specialisation choices, MBA fields/students, Dublin Business Schools, individual and external factors affecting career and specialisation choices.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The job prospects in the contemporary market are required a good knowledge of the management field in order to properly organising, controlling and coordinating of the efforts that are put in order to attain set goals. Management studies play an important role in the career building of the students to avail job opportunities prevailing in the market. There are different categories in which the management courses are undertaken by students such as Finance, International Business, HRM (Human Resource Management) as well as Marketing. The selection of the management stream or subject for the career building or professional growth is the major challenge faced by the students. The management stream or subject selection is influenced by the student, job and market related factors; for instance student's interest, job options and growth, job availability and security in integration of economic conditions.

There is a requirement of different and valuable skill in order to obtain the managerial position within a business organisation (Marques, Dhiman and Holt, 2012). Managerial skills development is directly linked to the management studies in different fields, and thus, selection of the specialised field of the management is the importantly required. Therefore, various management schools are providing multiple specialisation courses in the management field for the students to attain managerial positions in their specific area of interest.

The decision in regard to the selection of the field of specialisation is essential for students who are willing to pursue MBA (Masters in Business Administration) because it strongly influences the students' professional growth as well as progress in their career. However, there are diversified factors that pose an effect on the decisions of students regarding their choice of specialisation (Marques, Dhiman and Holt, 2012). In this context, the undertaken study is

emphasised on the detailed investigation into specialisation as well as career choices of Dublin Business School's MBA final semester students. This study is worth investigating to reveal importance of the specialisation selection for the students along with challenges in the way of specialisation selection.

1.2 Background

The specialisation choice of students in higher education has been a popular subject of debate among the scholars as it leads to the future career development of students and also, the marketers to have right people at the right position in organisations. The key point of argument for specialisation and career choices selection by students is in context to the student interest and academic performance to access job opportunities. The economic volatility is also significantly considered as a determinant for specialisation and career choices selection. Specialisation and career choices in the present time is not just for completing graduation and masters, while it is importantly for the knowledge development in context of the personal and professional growth. Career and specialisation choices of the students ensure availability of the skilled people as per the market demand so that businesses can maintain competitive advantage through accessing of skilled labour.

One such study conducted by Abdullah and Saeid (2016), investigated that students during the higher education such as MBA course, get easily influenced by others such as family, friends and faculties to select their specialisation area as they acquire knowledge of benefits concerned with that specific field that they are suggested to get opted, from their surroundings (Abdullah and Saeid, 2016). Another study by Ahmed, Sharif and Ahmad (2017), examined that mostly the students used to select the specialisation area in MBA by considering the career options and opportunities associated with it through assessing their own knowledge in that area

(Ahmed, Sharif and Ahmad, 2017). It has been indicated that selection of specialisation is all depended on the student interests and career goals. The investment and return are the key criterion used by the students for the selection of the management specialisation in MBA.

The student's desire to stimulate knowledge level in a particular speciality is the reason for the career and specialisation choices. The speciality enhances job prospects for a student that leads to personal satisfaction in terms of good salary, position and promotion. Besides this, "academic ability and achievement" of a student in the academics that is an individual characteristic of a student is also affected career and specialisation choices (Kallio, 2005, p. 111). The specialisation in the field that does not matches with the academic ability would not lead to success due to the problem in gaining knowledge from the subject in respect of both theoretical and practical. The distinct need of the students' at the different life stages has directly been influencing the career goals and ultimately effects upon the decision for specialisation for meeting educational needs (Kallio, 2005). The studies indicated that career and specialisation choices of the students are not influenced by the individual factors or characteristics, while external factors also predominantly affected their career choice. However, the previously conducted studies lack detailed comparative analysis of the factors to find out which of them are most influencing for students in their selection of specialisation field.

Further, one of existing literature asserts that Dublin is considerably a good location to pursue higher education courses such as MBA for students due to being a technologically advanced and developed city within Ireland (Holden, 2015). At the Dublin Business School, business and management courses for the students directly to the skills development along with valuable learnings of modern work practices and phenomenon, so as to effectively manage project activities and objectives. The development of business management expertise and

associated skills/abilities is the ultimate aim of the MBA program at Dublin Business School. Under the MBA at Dublin Business School, choices for the students involve information systems, marketing, finance, human resource management (HRM) and cloud computing. The stream choices and study plan for the MBA students of Dublin Business School contribute to "personal, academic and professional development. The studies at Dublin Business School are not limited to the theoretical or subjective knowledge, but it also involves knowledge and understanding of the global business environment to keep familiarise with the market issues in order to match skills development with the job requirements (Dublin Business School, 2018).

However, none of the studies identified the influencing factors regarding the selection of specialisation sources for students who carry out their MBA course in Dublin considering the job and career opportunities in the local and international business environment after passing out from business schools of Dublin. In this respect, the present study puts specific focus on undertaking the critical and comparative examination of ways and factors influencing career choices of final year students belong to Dublin Business School. Overall, the enquiry of the career and specialisation choices of MBA students in particular of Dublin Business School in this research meets the research gap of comparative knowledge of the factors. The differences in the selection of specialisation and career choices by MBA students is the research work having practical and real world significance. The research results are not in favour of students' development, but it also in favour in economic or companies' growth in terms of the availability of the skilled people.

1.2.1 Problem or Definition of the Problem

There is an increased range of competitive powers with the inflated range of higher education institutions in Dublin (Conway, 2009). Therefore, marketers are required to be highly

attentive and aware regarding the fundamental factors perceived by final year students of Dublin Higher Education Institutions while selecting specialisation area for higher education especially MBA. Various attributes or constructs are obtained as the key factors which influence the specialisation course' selection in MBA courses; however, multiple new determinants or variants (factors) are on the way because of changing or dynamic market nature, which requires being found out. Thus, these aspects generated the requirement of present research work that undertakes the examination of the choices of Dublin Business School's students in regard to their specialisation field in MBA course.

The wrong career and specialisation selection choices of MBA students would not obstruct their professional success, but it would raise the issue of limited availability of the knowledgeable workforce in the market. This research study in particular of the negative impacts of the wrong specialisation and career choice selection is intended to determine factor influencing the MBA students' decision of specialisation choices in Dublin Business School. The findings of this research project in pertaining to the factors associated with the specialisation and career choices would have substantial importance for the universities to organise supportive orientation and career counselling programs. Overall, the research problem that is being searched in this project is valuable to present relationship between specialisation choices and professional growth of the students, and its relative importance for the economic development.

1.3 Intend to Achieve

1.3.1 Research Question

The questions for the present research are given as follows:

RQ1. What are the key factors that influence the specialisation choices of the MBA students of the final year of Dublin Business School?

This research question is provided good knowledge of the factors associated directly with the specialisation choices decision of the final year MBA students of Dublin Business School. These are acted as determinants for the specialisation choices decision of MBA students' and thus, critical assessment of such determinants leads to conclude relative significance and effect on the personal and professional development.

RQ2. How MBA final semester students at Dublin Business School pursue specialisation and career choices?

This question is provided information about the logical process that useful for the specialisation and career choices in pursuing MBA. The effectiveness of process is presented while addressing this research question.

1.3.2 Research Aim and Objectives

The undertaken research is specifically aimed at undertaking the detailed examination of the way in which the MBA students of the final semester, as Dublin Business School select the field of specialisation as well as the career choice. In addition, the research also attempts to analyse the factors that influence choices of specialisation of final semester students of MBA at Dublin Business School. Considering research aim, the following objectives are set for the research.

- To understand the concept and importance of MBA in higher education for students' career and future jobs
- To analyse the way of career choices of final semester students of MBA at Dublin Business School
- To critically examine the factors influencing the choices of specialisation of final semester MBA students' at Dublin Business School

- To propose strategic solutions for MBA students to reduce the probability of making the wrong choices of MBA specialisation courses

1.4 Dissertation Roadmap

Chapter 1: Introduction: The initial phase involves brief introduction, background, the definition of the problem, key questions, objectives, aim, research structure and rationale or scope of the research work.

Chapter 2: Literature Review: This particular chapter will critically examine and review the existing literature to obtain already identified theoretical knowledge in the context of the research objectives. The focus of this chapter is to gain in-depth background knowledge of career and specialisation choices made by the factors, and factors associated with such choices decision in specific of the MBA students.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Methods: This chapter encompasses the description of all the crucial and relevant methods utilised in the research for collecting data, giving proper structure and design to the study, as well as, a method for analysing the data. The discussion relevant to the selection of the suitable methodological aspect and data collection strategy will present in this chapter with clearly depicting strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis/Findings: The chapter comprises the analysis, synthesis and evaluation of pivotal research findings to generate desired results to address problem undertaken in the research. Descriptive findings of the data collected through primary and secondary research will be reflected and interpreted in this chapter of the research study that focuses directly on addressing research aim/objectives and questions.

Chapter 5: Discussion- This chapter has presented an interpretation of results while answering to the research objectives and questions. Discussion chapter in the context of the

defined research question and review of literature studies will present contribution of the study in the research subject. The research limitations will also discuss in this chapter along with own work critical evaluation.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations: The final chapter involves the conclusion of the overall interpretation of the findings that considering all the research objectives in order to fulfil properly. Further recommendations are given in the direction or way to improve the identified issues in relation to the concerned subject area, and future implications.

1.5 Scope and Limitations

The scope of the present study is that it is capable of identifying and critically assessing the ways and factors that enable the MBA students to make the selection of their field of specialisation which further support them in obtaining job positions in the concerned field. The study will be useful for higher education institutions of Dublin to acknowledge and understand the specific reasons that support students to make career choices so that they become able to identify whether the students select the subject of their own interest or due to getting influenced by others. The marketers will also come to know with this study regarding the career aspiration of the students for specific job roles and positions by identifying the reasons for the specific field chosen by students in MBA. However, the study is observed to be limited in terms of focusing only on Dublin Business School. Further, the data confidentiality related ethical issues have also been experienced by the researcher in primary data collection due to which some students have not been in the state of revealing all the asked information.

1.6 Contribution or Rationale of the Study

The research is considered to be advantageous for the marketing firms to gain knowledge of the ways adopted by students in making career and specialisation field related choices in order

to attain specific job roles. The business firms will be able to attract skilled, competent and talented young employees by having significant knowledge facilitated in this research regarding factors contributing towards specific career choices made by students in MBA course's final semester. The findings of this research are useful for the students to make viable specialisation and career choice to meet academic goals. In addition, varied useful academic theories, concepts and arguments regarding student's decision making regarding career will widely be explored in this study to overcome existing literature gaps. Moreover, an empirical framework will be facilitated with this research for other scholars to conduct further research works in this field. The future scholars would be undertaken information of this research project as a base to conduct comparison of specialisation selection of students, who are likely pursuing other courses in different universities or schools of management.

1.7 Summary

The research topic of the career and specialisation choices of final semester MBA students of Dublin Business School is interesting to portray key decisive factors that lead to personal and professional development. The limited studies on this research subject have been extended scope to contribute in this research area, which would be worthy for the future students and the universities to design subject or choices offering to the students. The next chapter is the literature review that is to be reviewed existing studies to determine the research gap along with designing of the conceptual framework.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The review of empirical literature is a crucial phase in a research study as it supports the retrieval of detailed viewpoints, thoughts as well as investigated findings of other research work accomplished in the area of undertaken research. In this research, for conducting the literature review, some crucial themes related to MBA's concept and importance for students, the factors influencing students' decision regarding selection of specialisation area while pursuing MBA and their way of making career choices are developed as follows:

2.2 Determining Concept and Importance of MBA in Higher Education for Students

As determined by Marques, Dhiman and Holt (2012), MBA (Master of Business Administration) refers to higher level graduation degree which facilitates practical as well as theoretical knowledge regarding general functions related to business management. The general fields in which the MBA course is carried out globally involve marketing, accounting, the human resource as well as finance (Marques, Dhiman and Holt, 2012). More specifically, Thorpe (2016) asserted that management training has been recognised as the core element of the curriculum of MBA with the prominent emphasis on planning, leadership, organisational behaviour, business strategies as well as human competencies for operating small sized or large firms. Thus, the MBA programs are perceived to be highly important for gaining in-depth theoretical as well as real-world practical knowledge of the way in which an organisation manages its overall business (Thorpe, 2016).

In views of Powers and Schloss (2017), the programs of MBA are, nowadays, widening the focal point of them by involving training and education in the field of international business. This aspect will support the students in learning the way of managing a business in the

international environment and seek the opportunity of the job in global level firms (Powers and Schloss, 2017). However, on the contrary, Thorpe (2016) argued that management cannot be learned completely by students with only a set curriculum. For evidence, the contingency theory reveals that the effectiveness of management is considerably contingent on the interaction among specific organisational situations as well as managerial behaviours' application of individual. It reflects that the type of management of organisation varies relying upon the specific conditions or circumstances (Thorpe, 2016; Hatch, 2018).

In contrast, Marques, Dhiman and Holt (2012) emphasised that MBA is important and crucial in a way as it gives the students to gain possible practical knowledge at the initial level of working in an organisation and managing complex situations with proper decision making and leadership. For instance, MBA facilitates internship programs also which supports students to gain real-time experience of working in the organisation. However, with experience and self-cognitive skills, the student further attains skills of making decisions and taking actions based on organisation specific situations in future. Thus, MBA is pertained to be an effective learning program for students to attain basic skills related to the management field for seeking management position's job opportunities (Marques, Dhiman and Holt, 2012).

2.2 Factors influencing Specialisation Choices of Final Semester MBA Students

It is argued by Smeby (2007) that specialisation and career choices is relatively linked to the academic performance and career goals. Academic performance affects specialisation and career choices in respect of intellectual capability because selection of the tough subject by the low graded or average students induce problem in gaining in-depth subject knowledge (both theoretical and practical implications) that not worth contributing towards career growth. The student interest is the ultimate factor that linked directly with the academic performance. It has

been generalised that positive interlink of the academic performance and specialisation choices due to its direct effect on the career growth and knowledge development (Smeby, 2007). The professional knowledge gained from the chosen subject is significantly needed interest, involvement and intellectual ability. In the viewpoints of Abdullah and Saeid (2016), there are varied internal as well as external factors posing the impact on the students' decision of selecting a career or specialisation option during the MBA. It is also obtained by the study that external factors involve career opportunities, pursuing desired job roles in future and raise the chance of promotions which influence the decisions of students of selecting the specialisation in the certain field in the initial year of MBA. On the different part, internal factors increase the feeling of self-actualisation as well as affiliation in the MBA program's ending which make the students change the decision regarding the selection of specialisation subject in the final year. Moreover, students tend to clearly assess and manipulate own efficacy and interest level in the final phase of the program of MBA. Thus, these factors used to influence the specialisation option selection of students by MBA course' ending (Abdullah and Saeid, 2016).

Powers and Schloss (2017) obtained that psychological factors play a pivotal role in influencing students' decision regarding their specialisation choices. As per the Maslow's motivation theory, individuals get motivated for attaining their personal needs in terms of the feeling of achievement, growth and personal security. Similarly, while making career-related decisions, MBA students also get influenced by their psychological factors such as feeling or perception regarding career growth and job security prospects (Powers and Schloss, 2017; Conley, 2017). On the different side, Abdullah and Saeid (2016) determined that some social factors such as suggestions from friends, family members as well as teachers also encourage students to choose the specific field to pursue their MBA course's final phase. In such way, there

are varied factors which generally influence the students' decision related to select the specialisation field during the final semester of MBA (Abdullah and Saeid, 2016; Powers and Schloss, 2017).

2.4 Career opportunities associated with different MBA Specialisation choices

In the recent years, a number of MBA specialisation choices are available such as finance, marketing, human resource management, information systems, international business, and supply chain management. MBA program prepares the students for the corporate career with the in-depth learning of finance, entrepreneurship, economics, law, and human resource management. The students must consider a number of factors when choosing an MBA specialisation that would be best suitable for them. In addition to this, the students of Dublin Business School also take into account the return on investment associated with a course. The final decision of students regarding the MBA specialisation may also be affected by faculty members, academic culture, and career services associated with the selected institute (Whitler, 2018).

MBA in Finance has become the top choice of students for specialisation in final semester exam. The reason for students while selecting finance as a specialisation is that it offers various opportunities in the corporate world such as securities firms and banks. The students of finance have different career prospects such as accounting managers and financial analysts who are most prominent persons for the company for money management and developing financial policies. In addition to this, the student who likes to play with numbers and making the balance sheet and pursues strong analytical skills can also adopt finance management. The specialisation in finance prepares the students for exciting career opportunities such as merchant banking, financial consultants, international finance, and cash managers (Chumney, Ragucci and Jones,

2008).

In the viewpoint of Ramachandran (2010), students of MBA are also influenced in adopting marketing as specialisation subject for their final semester. The students having resource mobilisation skills, excellent communication skills choose marketing in their final year coursework to get the employment in the field of marketing and sales. MBA Marketing offers the students growing a career with full responsibilities involving consumer durables, non-durables, advertising media, fast moving consumer goods (FMCG), market research, sales and distribution to services marketing. In the viewpoint of Ramachandran (2010), students having outstanding and spontaneous nature and can influence others with their actions, words, and expressions can adopt MBA for their final semester. Moreover, the fat pay packages offered the marketing students as their role of project manager, brand managers, marketing managers, sales managers; market research analyst is a crucial factor for the students while choosing MBA as their coursework. Furthermore, Ramachandran (2010), has also observed that the top position in the multinational organisations is taken by the candidates of the marketing field (Whitler, 2018).

According to Turban *et al.*, (2008) MBA in Information Systems (MIS) has been increasingly popular among the students in recent years due to the diverse career opportunities. It is an appropriate specialisation for the students belonging to the IT background such as It graduate or software engineer. MBA in information technology opens the door for the students for the demanding positions like technical systems manager, technical consultant, system analyst, and business development manager. In addition to this, e-commerce and IT related industries offer good pay packages to the students having the degree of MBA in information technology. The students belonging to information technology background having the technical skills, programming skills, and problem-solving skills. Such skills help the students for developing the

optimum solution for enterprise resource planning and business development. The students of MBA are more focused on information technology as it provides an opportunity for them to work with the top 500 companies listed by Fortune. The IT professionals are demanded in each of the company and are reputed by the other staff due to their skills and knowledge in different prospects.

Holden (2015) has reported that human resource is considered as one of the trickiest specialisations among the MBA graduates. The students are interested in the area of recruitment and selection of employees, performance appraisals, and making effective policies for employee growth adopt MBA in HR. Apart from this, the HR specialisation helps the students to develop their career in the field of personnel management, industrial relations, and human resource managers.

2.4 Factors considered by the Students while selecting MBA in Higher Education degree

Management of business administration is considered as of the most popular degree among the student of Dublin Business School. According to Anojan and Nimalathan (2013), MBA is designed as a curriculum for the students who want to work in management and business by providing them skills for managerial positions. It involves various courses such as finance, marketing, and human resource, cloud computing. In the views of Noe *et al.* (2006) the universities are focused on providing the knowledge of real-world of business and enterprises through the coursework of MBA. In addition to this, the MBA programme influence the business knowledge and skills of graduate, which increase their earning potential and help them gain a high standard in the society. According to Abdullah and Saeid (2016), graduate students form a foundation for the management of resources and leadership in the organisations. The selection of the specialisation is also undertaken on the basis of the resources availability, so as to easily

develop knowledge and competence to gain position in the competitive world. It has been critically reviewed that students of the final year of MBA gives consideration to the various factors including curriculum design, professional development, practical utility of curriculum, job opportunities and contribution towards professional development. The focus on the students for the specialisation selection is not only on the knowledge enhancement, but it is mainly on the extent of contribution towards attaining career goals and professional development. Thus, there is significant relationship between specialisation selection and career growth.

Ng, Burke and Fiksenbaum (2008) have examined the criteria for among the employees in selecting the specialisation program for part-time MBA courses. The authors have identified that the majority of the students consider the suggestion from their friends, educational consultants, and seminars. Further, a majority of the students consider that institutional reputation in the HR, marketing, and finance is the most prominent factor while selecting an MBA programme. In addition to this, tuition fee, curriculum, local supporting staff, and guarantee of jobs are also considered by the university students, when they chose a specialisation for MBA in their final semester.

In the viewpoint of Li and Yeo (2011), student selection of MBA colleges and specialisation courses are affected by their personal characteristics, academic quality, and campus surroundings. In the similar regard, the authors also identified that income is the most crucial factor that affects the choice of students. In the regard, Holden (2015) has asserted that academic quality, cost of course, complexity, and duration of study is the essential factor for the students and their families. On the other hand, Ng, Burke and Fiksenbaum (2008) have identified the factors considered by the companies while selecting the prospective candidates. The authors have observed that oral communication, written communication, interpersonal skills, decision-

making skills, and analytical skills are the factors affects considered by the companies while selecting their employees. In this regard, Abdullah and Saeid (2016) have suggested that students should review the effectiveness of current MBA curriculums to meet the current market demand and expectations. According to Van der Wal and Oosterbaan (2013), students are motivated by the external factors while selecting an MBA program such as the desire of appraisal, promotion, and hope for well-recognised employment opportunities than they currently peruse. Moreover, the majority of the students also gain intrinsic motivation such as self-actualization, affiliation, achievement at the end of their degree. It is argued that motivation in form of intrinsic and extrinsic form both are directly related to the specialisation and career choices of students. However, Kolb and Kolb (2014) reflected that “educational learning environment” and “student learning style” are the two crucial factors affecting specialisation and career choices decision. In absence of the efficient learning environment, students are less likely opted interested specialisation. Thus, it has been analysed that specialisation choice decision is also considerably effected by the learning facilities. Learning style of students is associated with learning capabilities and thus, specialisation is also affected by the same factor for the good academic results and performance.

In the viewpoint of Li and Yeo (2011), graduates are more specific regarding the selection of MBA due to emerging issues such as advancement of career, promotion, and future development. In addition to this, there are certain careers that demand MBA for the career establishment such as banking, finance and consultancy. Due to this, companies are facilitating their employees to enrol in the MBA programs in order to get promoted. The student’s enrolment in the MBA program does not constitute a guarantee of their career growth; however, it may certainly be considered by the employers during the promotion prospects. The students of MBA

have the opportunity to learn management and general business studies that are required in all businesses. Li and Yeo (2011) have described that specialisation in a particular area helps the students to work in that field after the completion of their degree rather than moving in a different field for career development. However, it is critically analysed study by Kallio (2005) that academic performance and achievements are also played a vital role in the career and specialisation selection of the MBA students. The selection of the career and specialisation as per the previous academic performances/achievements indicates the interests in the studies that support in the theoretical and practical knowledge enhancement.

According to Anojan and Nimalathan (2013), students of Dublin Business School goes through four stages, when they make specialisation choices of final semester MBA described as problem recognition, problem search, identification of alternatives and making the final choice. The first stage is a problem identification stage, where the students recognise their current problem. Under this stage, the students realise the requirement of further education as an individual or professional. The second stage is problem search, wherein the students search for the college and universities in which the specific course or degree he/she is interested in are provided. For this purpose, the student search relevant data and information from the newspapers, the internet, friends, and colleagues. This information helps the students to analyse the data collected from various sources regarding the appropriate college and degree, which influence their decision making. The students have a variety of options at this stage such as public universities, private universities, and foreign educational institutes. The next stage is an alternative evaluation, wherein the interested candidates make their final judgement. In this step, the individuals evaluate different factors such as career objectives, prevailing environmental issues, reputation, and cost involved in the course. After the identification of these factors, the

student makes the final decision regarding their career.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework in the research work renders a vital ideology of the entire literature review that direct to the future research work by indicating factors essential to be explored and examined in the context of the research problem. The conceptual framework represents the core theme of the research and its related variables that are relevant to that particular theme. The present research study has a core theme of the key factors that influence the career specialisation choice of students for a final semester of MBA. The conceptual framework has defined some core factors as the key variables that linked to the research subject; such as career prospects, interest in the particular subject, social factor, financial factor and other related factors.

This research study has been carried qualitative research to identify the impact of the factors on the career and specialisation choices of the students that not critically explored in the previous studies. The collective influences of all these factors result into final choice of the students for the career specialisation that leads to achieving career growth. The figure of the conceptual framework depicts below indicates to the key theme of the research and related variables that are to be critically explored to fill the research gap.

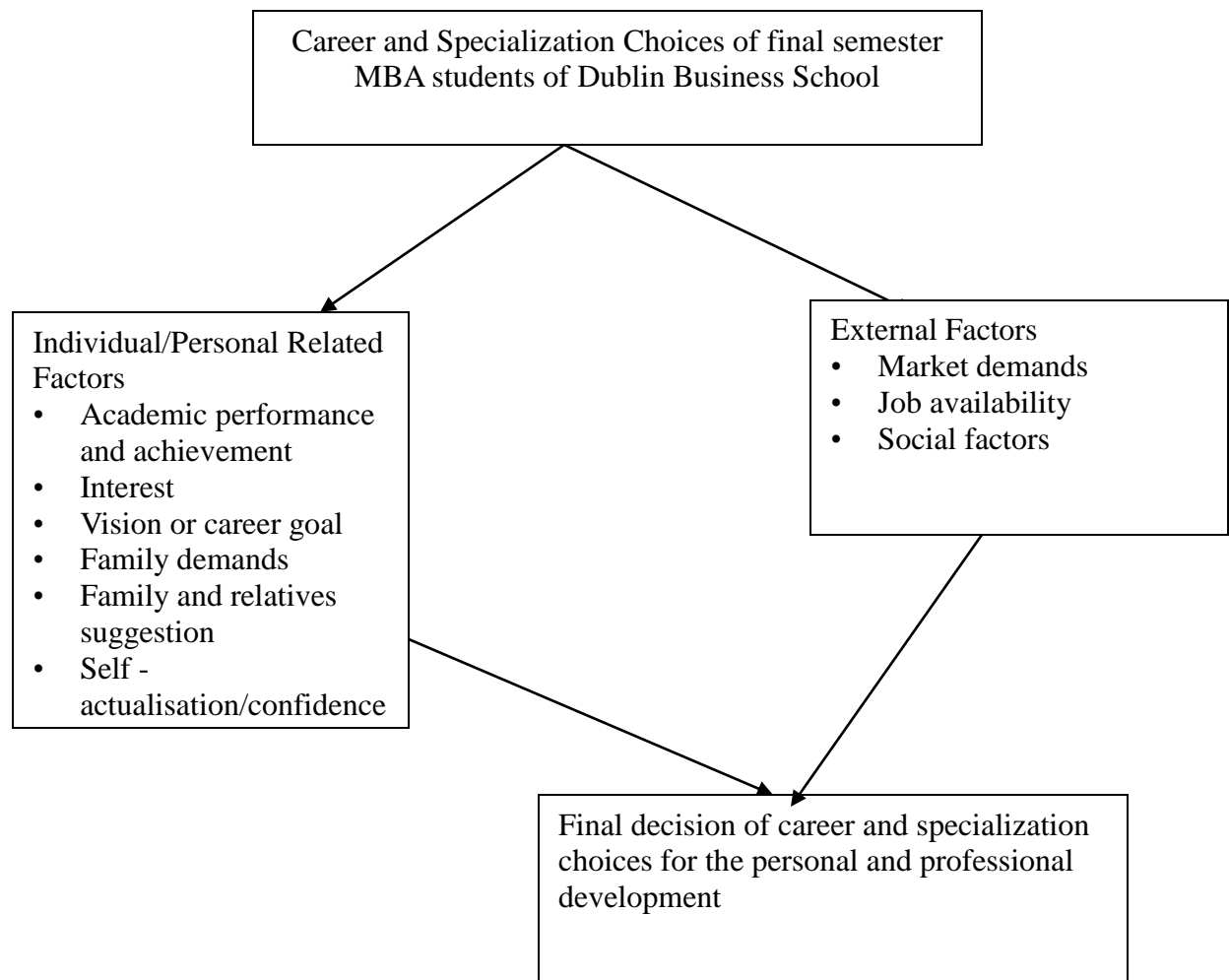


Figure: Conceptual Framework (Chumney, Ragucci and Jones, 2008; Li and Yeo, 2011; Marques, Dhiman and Holt, 2012; Abdullah and Saeid, 2016; Powers and Schloss, 2017)

2.6 Summary

It is summarised from the critique of the literature studies that MBA programs of the business school leads to the personal and professional development through offering structured courses under the different management fields. MBA courses have been enhanced skills and knowledge development that have significant practical implications in the real-world. The job options available in the market in the different management fields are directed towards stimulating self-confidence, communication, time management and other skills along with the knowledge management. Such development is all depended on the career and specialisation

choice and thereby, the right selection of specialisation choices is important for the students of final semester of MBA programs. The studies in the context of the factors influencing career and specialisation choices are reviewed to gain knowledge of the factors and direct influence of the factors on the decision making. The identified factors from the review of secondary studies has been indicated positive interlink with the decision of career and specialisation choices. The strategic way of considering market assessment, previous year students' experiences and suggestions of friends and family members are directly led to the right career and specialisation choices. The next chapter is developed in accordance to the research gap identified in the literature review chapter in which methodology and methods that supportive to the data collection have been presented with proper justification.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The research methodology comprises detailed and descriptive analysis of crucial research approaches and techniques which have been incorporated to conduct the research work (Smith, 2015). In this regard, for this research, the explanation of methods involving research approach, philosophy, design, data collection, sampling as well as analysis method, is undertaken. Moreover, the ethical considerations, as well as limitations linked with the adopted methods, are also explored under this phase of research.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Every project of research involves an inhibited belief scheme or system potentially in the research area that highlights the manner through which the problem inherent in the research is needed to be investigated. This belief system and set of assumption are recognised and regarded as research philosophy. This is an important methodological aspect that indicates to the assumptions and beliefs follow in the research while collecting data relevant to the research project. Basic categories of philosophy involve positivism as well as interpretivism (Walliman, 2015). Positivism philosophy has widely been referred to as suitable for research of quantitative nature wherein accumulation of data takes place with the support of scientific approaches such as experiments or survey. The reality in the positivism philosophy is considered as objective and focuses on proving single reality through determining relationship and hypothesis testing. Apart from it, interpretivism philosophy supports subjective knowledge based on social experiences and situational aspects wherein the researcher interprets the knowledge obtained from worldly reality (Rubin and Babbie, 2009). The focus of the interpretivism philosophy is on exploring multiple realities for the end outcomes.

In this study, interpretivism philosophy was employed as it helps in acknowledging situation-based aspects and obtained findings from subjective experiences potentially of individuals concerned with the research area. The rationale of adopting this philosophy is that interpretivism has been supported in having in-depth understanding and knowledge of factors affecting choices and selection of MBA specialisation in the final semester. For gaining views on interest area and career aspiration of students, it was crucial to investigate final year students' personal experience. Therefore, interpretivism philosophy was identified to be suitable as it emphasises on personal individuals' experience about the world from the multiple aspects to obtain and interpret the data to generate findings (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2015).

Interpretivism philosophy application in this research helps to determine cause-effect relationship between factors influencing career and specialisation choices of the students pursuing MBA at Dublin Business School. This philosophy helps collecting qualitative data in form of the subjective experience of Dublin Business School final semester MBA students, which is the key reason of selection. The information of the multiple dimensions inferred with the help of interpretivism philosophy in context of the factors affecting students' decisions for MBA choices helps addressing the research problem and questions. Moreover, positivism philosophy could not govern this study's conduction as it would not support collecting detailed and qualitative data about key elements influencing the career decisions of MBA students in the final semester. Therefore, this philosophy was rejected for the undertaken research.

3.3 Research Design

In the conduction of a research work, the essential aspect is to ensure an appropriate or pertinent flow and structure of the entire process for which the research design is responsible. Descriptive as well as exploratory are two vital categories of design (Bernard, 2017). The

descriptive design seeks to describe specific perception and phenomenon regarding the research subject to encompass detail of different aspects of the research. In contrast, exploratory design involves investigation as well as the exploration of new valuable and informative ideas emphasising on research relevant subject (Crowther and Lancaster, 2012). The research has applied descriptive design as it stressed upon detailed knowledge and descriptive illustrations of research findings regarding the factors linked to influencing MBA students' specialisation fields in relation to Dublin Business School.

The subject area required a critical and detailed evaluation of alternative choices of students in MBA specialisation. Therefore, descriptive design was considerably suitable for the study, unlike exploratory design that is relevant for examining and exploring wider information to identify correlations between key elements or variables undertaken in the research (Bergh and Ketchen, 2009). Descriptive design in this research study provides significant aid to determine relationship of the student's personal factors and external factors undertaken in the decision of career and specialisation choices. Besides this, this research design helps determining relationship of the student related factors, job related factors and economic or market related factors with the specialisation and career choices decision of the final year MBA students in Dublin. Descriptive design describes behaviour of the people associated with a subject and thus, preference to this design for qualitative data analysis helps in understanding data along with its implications in the study (Creswell, 2014). Exploratory design is not preferred because of significant focus on the collection of wide-ranging data to justify MBA final year students' selection of specialisation choices in MBA rather than just examining of the factors. Altogether, this design helps inferring in-depth and comprehensive knowledge that is collected qualitatively in the research study.

3.4 Research Approach

The substantial reasoning that supports in facilitating the correct direction to the process of research is called as the approach of research. Inductive as well as deductive are basic approaches utilised mostly in a research work (Rubin and Babbie, 2009). Deductive approach is commonly utilised in quantitative research based on hypothesis testing with the support of variables. Inductive approach mainly utilised in qualitative projects where the detailed investigation of the research problem is undertaken with the support of different prospects and theoretical underpinnings (Gillan and Pickerill, 2016). Both the research approaches move in different direction deductive in direction of top to bottom or inductive in direction of bottom to top for exploring data in generalise to specific form or specific to generalise form; respectively.

The present research project has been conducted based on the inductive approach as it processes data collection from specific observations to casual and general findings. An inductive approach was suitable for the research because it posed a major contribution in adding more knowledgeable aspects relevant to the research subject due to key emphasises on interpreting specific data for the generalised conclusion (Forrester and Sullivan, 2018). Moreover, the existing literature lacks proper information about factors influencing and impacting on MBA students' career inspirations in context to Dublin Business School. The undertaken subject area is relatively new that essentially needs a detailed investigation to address the existing research gaps. On account of this reason, use of inductive approach in this research fulfils research aim of having detailed information of the factors associated with career and specification choice of MBA students in particular to the research setting of Dublin Business School.

For this regard, an inductive approach was proved to be relevant to a high extent, unlike deductive approach which is more emphasised on justifying and testing variables relations.

Further, an inductive approach is also helpful in terms of facilitating the required flexibility in the final research outcomes with an intensive emphasis on attaining contextual insight into the problem involved in the study to facilitate theoretical development. Inductive approach in this research contributes to the valid generalisation on the specific information. The high feasibility of the research results inferred through applying inductive approach is also significant reason for chosen it instead of deductive approach. Another reason that supports selection of inductive approach is the specific nature of the research problem within which perception of MBA students of Dublin Business School is explored in context of the specialisation and career choices.

3.5 Research Strategy

Research Strategy involves a systematic action plan that is selected for arranging and organising the research adequately. The general categories of the strategy of research involve qualitative as well as quantitative. The strategy of qualitative type supports in undertaking theoretical description and interpretations of the outlined research problem with the critical examination of information. In contrast, the quantitative strategy focuses on statistical information to generate quantified results by testing and evaluating variables (Taylor, Bogdan and DeVault, 2015). The contemporary research has undertaken qualitative strategy wherein the detail investigation and theoretical experiences have been incorporated related to factors having the influence on decisions of specialisation field selection of MBA students potentially in Dublin Business School.

This strategy supported in attaining elaborated and evidence-based information from varied prospects to justify the results' validity. In contrast, the quantitative strategy has been rejected considering the subject nature of the research and this strategy is more valuable in statistical data based studies wherein experimental methods are used to obtain information (Gravetter and

Forzano, 2018). In this research study, application of qualitative strategy is beneficial to collect data in the detailed and comprehensive way for the logical research outcomes. The limited information on the research subject has been inducing need for the detailed enquiry and thereby qualitative research best suits to this study. The existing studies are not particularly indicated selection of specialisation of MBA students and thus, qualitative data collection through primary methodology meets research objectives.

3.6 Data Collection Method

For addressing the problem identified and assessed in regard to the research subject, method of data collection is required to be selected in the correct and logical manner. Secondary and primary are core types of methods for collecting data for the conduction of research work. With primary methods such as interview, observation, survey and focus group, mainly primary or first-hand data can be collected. In contrast, the secondary data or information is gathered using secondary information sources such as books, web-pages, articles and journals (Bernard, 2017). The undertaken research has been conducted using face to face type interview as the primary method for information collection. The potential reason for selecting this method is that it contributed towards gathering data related to the personal experience of MBA students in regard to the selection of their MBA specialisation field during the final semester.

The interview has supported in putting broader insight into research problem by exploring multiple prospects regarding factors deriving the career inspirations of students of MBA in Dublin Business School. Further, considering subjective and qualitative nature of research, interview method is undertaken to be highly appropriate because it is beneficial in obtaining relevant and experience-based information to ensure research results' validity (Forrester and Sullivan, 2018). Interview method in this research study is given good scope to have detailed

discussion with the chosen sample size of Dublin Business School MBA's students. There is an opportunity and flexibility to clarify unclear information in seeking of the valid, relevant and logical answers to the research questions.

Further, more specifically, a semi-structured interview was selected as this type of interview provides required flexibility to modify the questions or addition of the new questions in the middle of the interview as per the situation and for collecting desired data based on the logical sequence of the answers (Bergh and Ketchen, 2009). Ambiguities are lesser in this type of qualitative data collection because of nonrigid process of data collection. The unstructured interview was rejected due to the rigid nature of it that does not give scope for clarifying ambiguities (Gravetter and Forzano, 2018). On the contrary, quantitative method such as survey was also rejected because the research does not need any variable testing or statistical information; instead, it required explanation and critical evaluation of influencing factors for students' career aspiration in the final year of MBA which could be attained effectively with interview method. Interview best fits to the research study in order to recognise factors in detailed for the further evaluation in context of the effect on career and specialisation choices in MBA courses for the professional development.

3.7 Sampling and Process

Sampling is the way of deciding the sample population which is appropriate for collecting primary information relevant to the research subject. One of the techniques of sampling is non-probability and other is probability sampling. Non-probability sampling strategies are classified as quota sampling, snowball sampling, self-selection sampling, convenience sampling and purposive sampling in which direct involvement of the researcher in order to meet purpose associated with the research, however, selection of the participants might be biased (Wilson,

2014; Walliman, 2015). Apart from it, probability sampling strategies are classified as simple random sampling, systematic sampling, cluster sampling and stratified sampling. In probability sampling, specific sample population is selected on the basis of probability for the equal chance of selection (Smith, 2015).

In this research, target sample involves 32 students of MBA final semester studying in Dublin Business School. This sample was chosen with the non-probability technique to align selection of the participants directly with the research purpose or aim. Under the non-probability sampling, purposive sampling is used for the selection of the students of final semester of MBA that led to identify about career and specialisation choices proceeded by them. With the provision of this sampling technique, the authenticity and validity of the results get ensured in terms of keeping participants' selection with the research purpose. The random sampling has not been selected because it could not assure selection of the participants in aligned to the research study; however, it leads to generates bias free results (Smith, 2015).

Moreover, 32 participants were sufficient to gather an adequate amount of information for the research because interview process with the limited sample size has been given good scope for carry out detailed discussion the research subject. The acquisition of the research data in the manageable way in the interviewing process is the reason for considering taken views of 32 participants. Further, asked the participants to show their ID cards in order to confirm whether they are pursuing MBA in Dublin Business School. Consent forms were given at first and Post to taking informed consent, a meeting was conducted to inform the participants regarding details of research and the interview.

Semi-structured questionnaire comprises of open-ended questions is designed as per the research objectives. After this, proper interview was conducted, and points were noted down for

the future use in the present research. The interview process in this research is sequentially followed to collect ample relevant data from students and ensures meeting ethical requirements associated with the primary data collection.

3.8 Data Analysis

For analysing as well as evaluating the data findings, specific data analysis methods are selected. Graphical representation based statistical method, as well as the thematic method, are widely utilised categories of data analysis methods. Statistical based methods are employed potentially into the research that involves data collection using quantitative techniques such as experiments as well as surveys (Bergh and Ketchen, 2009). Apart from it, the thematic method is adopted mainly in research wherein qualitative data is to be analysed such as interview transcripts (Guest, MacQueen and Namey, 2011). In this research project, the thematic analysis approach has been adopted with the support of which transcripts of the interview were evaluated with literature findings' supportive evidence. A thematic approach was appropriate in this research as it was helpful in the systematic analysis of information obtained via a qualitative method aligning properly with research-based objectives. This approach was properly contributed towards evaluating key data sets in the stepwise procedure with detailed and varied prospects to ensure the authenticity of the results (Bernard, 2017). It offered a comprehensive procedure mainly for inferring and exploring the factors in detail to examine their effect on career choices of final semester MBA students. The formulation of the themes for the interpretation of the qualitative data (written interview transcripts) in this research project helps revealing key findings that addresses the research objectives and questions. Data analysis under the themes ensures viable interpretation of the broad information and thereby, it is suitable for the qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2014). There might be an issue of wrong and

manipulative interpretation of the data that effect on authenticity and reliability of the findings. In concern to this issue, thematic analysis of the interview data is underpinned with the available literature evidence. Apart from it, the graphical method was not suitable because it supports the representation of quantitative or numeric data findings which is utilised potentially in quantitative methods (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2015).

3.9 Ethical Consideration

In the research, varied ethical standards and principles have been followed for guaranteeing or assurance of research's validity, reliability as well as inherent credibility. In this essence, informed consent was sent or facilitated to participants to take the assurance of their willing participation in the study. Maintenance of confidentiality and safety of data provided by participants was ensured throughout the research by following ethical norm of data anonymity and privacy from the third party access. Along with it, the participant's values and dignity were also maintained throughout the research by including discussion on the aspects associated with the research subject; not any personal related questions. Participants were also not forced or obliged to participate in research and were left free to move out from the research at any point of time. Only authentic and peer-reviewed sources have been utilised in the research project execution to assure the reliability and values of the outcomes. The scholars studies used in this research to present research background, critique of literature in the literature review chapter and use of secondary findings to underpin primary data are correctly cited and referenced in the bibliography. Lastly, there was no attempt of copying and pasting of information from an already existing and available data sources. The ethical consideration of plagiarism is abided in this research to prevent deterioration of the originality of the data.

3.10 Research Limitation

One of the limitations obtained from the research is that it is based mainly on qualitative interview method for gathering data. For conducting more detailed research, focus group or interview could also be relevant for the study. Moreover, exploratory design's utilisation in the research could be more valuable as it could help in further exploring a new type of knowledge as well as theories regarding factors contributing students' career selection (Bernard, 2017). Lastly, the sample size comprising only 32 students could be increased to get more prospects on the undertaken research subject.

3.11 Summary

The research was carried out with the questionnaire and interview method wherein a sample of 32 MBA final year students from Dublin Business School was selected. For analysing data, thematic analysis technique was adopted and employed for systematically and descriptively evaluating the data with available literature's support. Moreover, inductive approach along with interpretivism philosophy was opted to generate flexible results with interpretations of wider perspectives on the research subject. The research also abides by crucial ethical principles involving participants' willing participation, data safety assurance, avoiding plagiarism and using authentic information sources. Further, the limitations linked to the research are that it could use observation or focus group method for gathering information and exploratory design could also be adopted for exploring and adding new theoretical framework linked to the research subject. The next chapter is the data findings/analysis under which thematic analysis is being applied to analyse qualitative data accumulated in the interview process with final semester students of MBA of Dublin Business School.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

The chapter of the research will focus on evaluating the research information that has been gathered during the primary data collection process. The interview responses and data obtained from 32 different participants will be analysed using the thematic analysis method. Under the thematic analysis, different themes have been formulated in alignment with the research aim, objectives, interview questions, and literature findings. The formulation of different themes will be highly useful in order to examine the career and specialisation choices that are made by the MBA students. In the analysis of the interview process, the following themes have been formulated for the systematic analysis and reporting of the research findings.

Theme 1: Significance of MBA in higher education for Students

Theme 2: Critical Factors Influencing the Specialisation and Career Choices of MBA students at Dublin School

Theme 3: Career Opportunities associated with Distinct MBA Specialisation Courses

Theme 4: Strategic Ways to Minimise the Probability of Wrong Choices made by Students in relation to MBA Specialisation Courses

The key findings obtained under each different theme have also been equally supported from the participant responses. The interview participants responses are noted and summarized. This precaution has been taken to ensure the confidentiality of the research participants as well as adhere to the ethical research principals. During the survey, breach of GDPR issues have been raised by some participants and few were afraid to disclose the details. Instead of taking names each respondents are mentioned as alphabets.

4.2 Thematic Analysis

The key findings under each theme will be presented in this particular section in order to attain logical and meaningful research outcomes. Each derived theme has provided an incremental contribution in the direction of finding the solution to the research problem.

Theme 1: Significance and Potential Benefits of MBA in higher education for Students

The first theme discusses the importance and role of MBA for students enrolled in post-graduation courses. The undertaking of distinct MBA specialisation courses allows students to gain in-depth theoretical and practical knowledge about the ways that are used by businesses for managing their day-to-day business operations. In this regard, respondent A opined that *“In my opinion, MBA has high relevance in higher education studies as it facilitates the development of managerial and technical knowledge of students, which is of utmost importance during the initial level of working in an organisation.”* Majority of the respondents have expressed similar views concerning the MBA program and its significance in higher education for students. Respondent B, adding to this stated that *“I believe MBA program allows students to stay better-prepared to get a reputed job in the business world through practical training along with the in-depth theoretical knowledge through classroom sessions.”* Similarly, respondent C expressed *“The undertaking of distinct MBA specialisation courses increases the career options, which is important for any masters’ student.”* Respondent D also supported this opinion and expressed *“I believe along with the multiple career option, MBA provides an opportunity for students to form strong communication networks and relationship with their colleagues and peers during the practical training and classroom sessions, which provides long-term value in terms of getting a reputed job.”* The right specialisation and career choice selection by the students of final year of MBA would help in getting reputed job and growth in terms of the salary, position and

experience.

From the above responses, it can be analysed that, MBA program has high importance in higher education studies as it allows the students to get practical knowledge and experience that is essential while working at reputed business firms operating in different industries. MBA program also enables the students to get the real-time experience of working at different firms during their internship and training programs. MBA program further allows the students to get better prepared for their future jobs, increases career options, and provides an opportunity for students to form a strong relationship with colleagues. Besides the technical and managerial skills, MBA program also has high relevance in terms of personality development of students. In this regard, respondent E stated, *‘I believe undertaking of MBA allow the students to improve their soft skills, which is important in their future job roles.’*

Adding to this respondent F expressed his views *“In my opinion, MBA has high value in higher education as the undertaking of public speaking, conflict resolution, negotiation, and teamwork courses during MBA contributes in overall personality development of students.”*

2 Respondent (G and H) have expressed contradictory viewpoints concerning the role and significance of MBA for post-graduate students. Respondent G stated that *“In my opinion, MBA courses are a major investment that has been made by students for their personal development. It also affects student’s stream of income, but getting high-quality MBA education is important for students to get positive ROI and expected job roles.”* Adding to this, respondent H opined *“MBA contributes in improving managerial and technical skills of students, but the majority of the MBA programs across different universities are not doing enough to develop soft skills of students, which is critical in future job roles.”*

From the collected data and interview it is clear that **90%** of the respondents believe that MBA program will improve students' soft skills, communication, culture gap, and adequate practical knowledge. On the other hand, rest 10% believe it will not given much impact in the formation of students in their career. It can be interpreted from the above responses that MBA programs contribute in overall personality development of students. The undertaking of soft-skill improvement and personality development classes during the MBA curriculum helps the students to become competent in their future job roles. However, it can also be analysed that quality of MBA education is also an important aspect while determining its effectiveness in overall student development at post-graduate level. It has been analysed overall professional development is directly linked to the carer choice because it boosts up confidence and motivation. The knowledge gaining of the particular subject helps in achieving future and career targets and thereby, decision of selection is importantly consider future goals in order to integrate with the self-development and self-actualisation needs.

Theme 2: Critical Factors Influencing Specialisation Choices of MBA Students at Dublin School

The second theme addresses the critical factors that influence the specialisation choices of final semester MBA students. Career progress increased job opportunities, and promotion was found to be the most crucial factors that influence student decisions concerning specialisation in specific areas such as HR and marketing in the MBA. Addressing this aspect “*I strongly believe that career progress is one the most important factors that are considered by students before making their specialisation choices in MBA.*” Majority of the respondents have agreed that career progress and growth opportunities in the future are important for selecting a particular specialisation area of MBA degree program. One Respondent opined “*I believe that*

specialisation choices of MBA students are also influenced by the improvement in career development aspect that is important for final semester students after degree program completion." Another Respondent has also agreed to the career development aspect, and added to this statement *"According to me, the efficacy level and interest in a particular specialisation area of MBA are also some of the crucial factors that largely influences their specialisation choices of MBA students ."* The self-actualisation and affiliation in the MBA program are also important aspects affecting the specialisation choices of final year MBA students. In this regard, another respondent stated: *"I believe that during the initial few months of the MBA degree program, the self-actualisation and affiliation in a particular specialisation area of MBA influence the future specialisation decisions of students."*

From the data it is clear that more than **80%** students choose their specialisation base don their career and availability of job in the market so as to secure their future. Nearly **15%** students followed the path what they are doing as it meet the demands in the current job market. From the above responses, it can be inferred that specialisation choices of MBA students are largely influenced by the career progress and career development opportunities that are available in that particular specialisation area in the near future. The internal factors such as interest and efficacy level also play an important role in determining the specialisation choices made by the final year MBA students. The feedback and reviews received from the seniors, university professors, and industry experts concerning growth opportunities in a particular specialisation area of MBA also contribute to the specialisation choices that are made by MBA students.

As mentioned by a respondent" *I think that the social factors such as family, friends, and professors suggestions also influence the final year MBA students' decisions concerning selection of a particular field or specialisation area to pursue MBA course."* Financial stability

and high Return-on-Investment (ROI) have also been highlighted by the majority of the participants as the crucial elements that influence the final-year MBA students' specialisation choices. Addressing this particular aspect, respondent G claimed *"I believe that attaining high ROI and financial stability are considered as important factors by final semester MBA students while identifying the specialisation area of their choice."* A Respondent has also agreed to the viewpoints concerning financial stability and high ROI expectations, but also expressed contradictory views expressed *"In my opinion, completing MBA from reputed universities allows the students to earn more income than other post-graduates. However, I also believe that psychological factors such as perception or feelings regarding job security and career growth also influence our specialisation decisions."*

After interpreting the above statements, it has been analysed that the specialisation choices of final semester MBA students are largely influenced by the financial stability and high ROI expectations. These factors are pivotal in shaping the specialisation decisions of MBA students. The social factors such as family and friends suggestion also serve as the influential or guiding force for the MBA students to select a particular area of specialisation such as HR for pursuing the MBA course. However, it has also been evaluated that psychological factors such as job security and career growth perception or feelings among students also contribute in their decisions concerning selection of a particular specialisation area in the final year of MBA.

Theme 3: Career Opportunities associated with Distinct MBA Specialisation Courses

The third theme discusses the career opportunities that are available with distinct specialisation courses of MBA according to the perception of students while undertaking the MBA degree program for higher education. The enrolment in MBA program offers numerous carer opportunities for MBA graduates in the field of Finance, Human Resource Management,

Digital Marketing and Cloud Computing. Addressing this aspect, respondent A stated *“The undertaking of distinct MBA specialisation courses allows the MBA students to enhance their overall knowledge and learning, which increases the job prospects for them in the near future.”*

In the same way, respondent B claimed that *“In my opinion, the undertaking of MBA specialisation courses such as HRM, allow the students to work in the distinct HRM areas, which include HR development, workforce planning and employment, total rewards management, and employee labour relations.”* Apart from that, Respondent C has given the statement that *“In my opinion, the undertaking of different specialisation courses allows us to improve the area specific skills and knowledge. Finance is a top choice for the majority of the MBA students, and it enables us to find different career prospects such as financial analysts, Underwriter, Mortgage Advisor etc.”* Respondent E answered upon the same question that, *“According to me, the MBA students that possess excellent communication skills and decision-making ability have excellent career prospects in the field of sales and marketing and digital marketing gives another name for it and in fact they can become good customer service experts or online sales experts.”* Adding to this, respondent D said that *“The undertaking of marketing specialisation provide excellent job opportunities to students. Students can work as marketing, advertising, and sales managers, who are responsible for developing detailed marketing and promotional strategies at different firms.”*

The above responses indicate that numerous career and growth opportunities are available to students after completion of their distinct specialisation programs under the MBA program. The responses indicated that students, who are highly motivated, mature, and prefer challenging work could explore the career opportunities in the field of sales, marketing, advertising, and public relations. Furthermore, the students possessing analytical and logical thinking skills can find excellent growth prospects in the field of accounting and finance.

Moreover, the responses further indicate that communication skills, and students positive perceptions of a particular specialisation area allow them to attain success in future job roles. Addressing this aspect, respondent F claimed *"As far as the job opportunities are concerned in relation to a particular specialisation area, MBA student's perception, knowledge and skills are vital in terms of attaining a reputed job in the near future."* The same sentiments have been reflected by Respondent G in this response expressing, *"In my opinion, abundant job opportunities are available for MBA students, but they should possess the right skills and knowledge concerning the specialisation area of their choice. For instance, MBA students who prefer task variety travel and likes working with different people can find excellent job prospects in the field of sales and marketing."* On the different part, Respondent H depicted that *"According to me, MBA students of HR major can find job opportunities in the area of workforce planning and employment, industry relations, and total rewards management. HR major students can work as HRIS director and administrator, business analysts, and chief human resource officer. However, the students must possess excellent communication and analytical skills to succeed in their future job roles."*

From the data collected, **46.87%** of the students choose MBA Finance as their specialisation as it gives more job opportunities in the current scenario. This specialisation has more demand and helps students to get jobs easily. There are variety of fields in finance where a finance graduate can move as finance is an integral part of every business and every human being. **21.87%** of students choose digital marketing as it is the new form of marketing. Most companies do digital marketing as it is the easiest and less costliers way to market their product or business. Students choose this because an MBA and an IT related background or addon courses gives more privilege to their resumes when the apply for a job. **18.75%** of students choose cloud computing

as their specialisation as IT boom is all over the world. Any discipline is an impact in the job market. Companies are looking for IT background students as IT is playing a major role in business and all related fields. **12.5%** of students only choose Human Resource as HR lost its value somewhere in the new generation. But still people ambassadors are more important in business when related to an employee's payroll and people issues in jobs. So, it cannot be underrated as it is also an integral part. From the above responses, it can be interpreted, that MBA students' perception towards a particular specialisation area, efficacy level, skills, and proper knowledge is vital to find ample career and growth prospects in different specialisation fields of MBA program. However, it is important for the students to gather area specific skills, knowledge, and training to attain their desired job role after MBA degree completion.

Theme 4: Strategic Ways to Minimise the Probability of Wrong Choices made by Students in relation to MBA Specialisation Courses

The fourth theme discusses the ways to minimise the probability of wrong choices that are made by the final semester MBA students in relation to their specialisation choices. The students must consider the personal interest in the specialisation area, past-academic achievements, and efficacy level in order to avoid the wrong choices concerning the selection of a specialisation area. Addressing this aspect, respondent A stated *"According to me, the interest in the specialisation field must be considered by the MBA students to avoid the wrong specialisation choice."* Adding to this argument, respondent B claimed *"In my opinion, students make wrong specialisation choices due to their misconception concerning a particular specialisation area and the associated jobs that they will be doing after the MBA program. Thus, students must properly identify their area of interest and related skills and knowledge to avoid wrong career choices."* Majority of the participants have similar viewpoints concerning the ways to avoid the

wrong specialisation choices. Respondent C depicted that *“I think that negative or inaccurate perceptions concerning specialisation areas and the subsequent careers options are responsible for the wrong specialisation choices made by students. Thus, it is important that students identify their existing skill set and interest in the subject to avoid wrong career choices.”*

From the data it is clear that **50%** of the students choose specialisations based on their conception towards it. It can be either misleading or wrong perception. Self-interest does not have any role in this matter. An individual loses his self-interest when He/She goes behind perception. But rest **50%** choose their specialisations as they already have a base in that particular area or have a family business background etc. From the above responses, it can be interpreted that student's misconception concerning a particular specialisation area, poor skill-set, and lack of knowledge concerning the career options available in different specialisation filed is responsible for their wrong specialisation choices. It can be further analysed that identification of an existing skill set and interest in the subject is vital for students to avoid wrong specialisation choices. The students must consider the perceived and real abilities before making their career and specialisation choices.

Addressing this aspect, respondent E claimed that *“In my opinion, students should focus on rectifying their existing abilities and knowledge such as strong quantitative skills to make the right career choices. For instance, the students with strong quantitative skills can select MBA majors such as, finance, and Cloud Computing to increase the probability of success in the near future.”* On the other hand, respondent D claimed that *“According to me, the final semester MBA students can avoid the wrong career and specialisation choices by taking career-related suggestions from their university counsellors, professors, and colleagues as they can share their experience and knowledge concerning the future job and growth prospects available in a*

particular MBA specialisation area or field." Respondent F also agreed to this, and added to this *"I think that information, inspiration, and opinions obtained from university professors can be valuable to students in terms of avoiding wrong specialisation choices."* On the other hand, respondent G claimed *"According to me, the students must consider their past academic achievements, management ability, analytical, logical, and strategic thinking skills in order to avoid wrong specialisation choices."* In the same line, Respondent D has given the statement that *"In my opinion, the wrong specialisation choices can be avoided by MBA students by acquiring adequate information concerning the employment and career growth opportunities in different specialisation fields of MBA degree program."*

It can be interpreted from the above participant responses that the external influences such as suggestions received from the university professors and counsellors are helpful for the final semester MBA students to avoid wrong specialisation choices. The students can also make accurate decisions concerning the selection of a particular specialisation area by giving consideration to their past academic achievements, logical and strategic thinking ability. MBA students should also identify the appraisal, promotion, and employment opportunities in different specialisation fields of MBA to avoid the wrong career and specialisation choices.

4.3 Summary

Overall, it can be summarised from the findings of the interview data process that MBA has high relevance in higher education for students in terms of increasing their overall managerial, technical, and interpersonal skills. A variety of factors such as job security, financial gains, career progress and development, and family and friends suggestions influences specialisation and career-related choices of the final semester MBA students.

Chapter 5: Discussion

It can be discussed on the basis of the primary data findings that MBA has high relevance in higher education for students as it increases their overall technical, managerial, and interpersonal skills that are necessary to attain success in their future job roles. The other literary sources also support this aspect revealing that MBA programs contribute to an increase in student's knowledge and also provide them with insights into the challenging and complex dynamic business environment. The training and internship programs of MBA allow the students to get an idea regarding the real-world business problems and ways to solve them (Bruce, 2006; Beenen and Rousseau, 2010). The primary findings have also supported this fact revealing that enrolment in MBA degree program enables the students to get prepared for their future job roles, which are inherently challenging. It has been discussed that future goals of the students is the base for the specialisation and career choice selection that eventually help in the accessing targeted job with good professional development.

The findings from the interview also revealed that specialisation choices of final year MBA students are influenced by a variety of factors, which include career growth and development prospects, interest and efficacy level. The other literary source also supports this aspect revealing that MBA students student existing skill set, interest in the subject, and perceived fit between their abilities and the specialisation area are some of the crucial factors that influence their specialisation choices during the final year. The findings from the literature also revealed that the students also consider career growth and development opportunities in a particular specialisation area before making their specialisation choices (Allen *et al.*, 2014). The interview findings also support this fact as the majority of the participants have agreed that job

prospects and opportunities in a particular major area of MBA are the crucial factors that encourage students to opt them. It can also be discussed on the basis of primary data findings that the students also consider high ROI, salary and subsequent compensations before making their specialisation choices. The career suggestions received from friends, parents, and professors also have a major influence on the student's decisions concerning selection of a distinct major area of MBA. The other literary sources also support this fact indicating that the external influences such as parents and university counsellors' suggestions largely influence final semester MBA students' decisions concerning selection of a particular specialisation area. The university professors provide information, inspiration, and share their opinions concerning career prospects in different major areas of MBA, which assist students in making accurate career choices (Allen *et al.*, 2014; Abdullah and Saeid, 2016).

Furthermore, it can also be analysed from the primary data findings that plentiful career prospects and growth opportunities are available for MBA graduates in different specialisation fields of MBA. MBA graduates from different specialisations such as HR, marketing, and finance can reap high ROI, good salaries, and desired job roles after completing their degree program with good academic grades. The literature also supports this aspect revealing application of the acquired knowledge and skills obtained from the MBA program in real-world business environment allow the MBA graduates to attain success in their job roles. The technical and managerial skills enhancement during the MBA program helps the MBA graduates to find the solution of the complex organisational problems in an easy manner (Guha, Chattopadhyay and Mondal, 2013; Buenviaje *et al.*, 2016). It can also be discussed on the basis of the interview findings MBA graduates can work in the field of finance, accounting, marketing, information systems, international business, and human resource management. However, it is important that

MBA students improve their overall competency skills, which include, but not limited to, oral and written presentations, communication, decision making, leadership, and management ability.

It can also be discussed on the basis of literature findings that MBA students can avoid wrong specialisation choices during their final semester by taking suggestions and guidance from the university professors, counsellors, and seniors. MBA graduates should also focus on acquiring adequate information concerning career prospects and growth opportunities that are available in different specialisation areas to select a suitable MBA specialisation field during their final semester (Allen *et al.*, 2014; Subramaniam, Yusoff and Arumugam, 2014). The interview findings also support this aspect revealing the valuable ideas, suggestions, and opinions received from the university professors, counsellors, and family members help the MBA students to make accurate career choices. The personal interest, past academic achievements, and existing skill set evaluation also help the MBA students to avoid wrong career choices. The literary findings also support this fact revealing that intrinsic factors such as students existing skill set, subject interest, and realisation of perceived fit between the MBA specialisation and own abilities can help the students to avoid wrong specialisation choices (Ahmed, Sharif and Ahmad, 2017; Nyamwange, 2016).

The outcomes obtained in the current research have also provided a valuable contribution to the existing body of literature concerning the factors influencing specification and career choices of MBA students. The findings from the research have revealed that MBA has high relevance for MBA students in higher education as it contributes in an increase in the overall managerial and technical competencies of students that are vital in the contemporary business environment. Some crucial factors such as career progress, development, growth opportunities, salary expectations, high ROI, influence of friends, family members, and university professors,

and job security are found that influences the specialisation and career-related choices of the final semester MBA graduates (Powers and Schloss, 2017; Abdullah and Saeid, 2016). Thus, the outcomes obtained from the current research have provided value in the academic context. The useful theories, concepts and arguments presented in the current research concerning the student's decision making regarding career and specialisation choices will bridge the gap that is available in the existing literature. The findings from the current research will also assist the business practitioners, HR specialists, and marketing firms to acquire information concerning the factors that are considered by MBA graduates while making their career choices in different areas. The findings highlighted in the current research will also help future scholars to conduct a more robust empirical investigation analysing the impact of internal and external factors on the career and specialisation choices made by MBA students.

On the other hand, the research has some limitations also. The sample population selected in the research for the interview process is small; thus, the findings obtained from the research cannot be generalised to a broader population (Ogden, 2018). Furthermore, due to the confidentiality related ethical issues, the participants from Dublin Business School have not provided in-depth details concerning the aspects that are considered by them while making specialisation choices in the final semester of the MBA degree program. Furthermore, the outcomes and findings are obtained in the research have been interpreted from the interview responses, which is highly subjective in nature; thus, lacks accuracy and reliability. The bias nature of the research participants and the misinterpretation of the interview responses by the researcher during the data analysis might affect the overall reliability of the research outcomes. Due to the time-constraints and unavailability of the students, the survey process was not much effective as expected. However, the undertaking of the semi-structured interview process in the

research was effective in terms of obtaining detailed and in-depth information concerning varied aspects that influence the career and specialisation choices of MBA students during the final semester. In the discussion section, the interview findings obtained have been compared and supported with the literature findings to cross-check their validity and reliability.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusion

From the overall analysis, it has been generalised that career and specialisation choices decision of the MBA students is not just mere selection from the different options, while it involves critical assessment of the options in consideration of the various factors that are directly influencing on the specialisation choices. The critical assessment of the choices helps to select an option realistic to the professional growth. There is a directly proportional relationship between the factors, and career and specialisation choices. In the higher education, pursuing of the MBA studies with right specialisation is not only for the knowledge enhancement, however; it linked directly to the skills enhancement to match with the job opportunities related with the specialisation. The qualitative data from interview responses indicated that importance of MBA programs are immensely enhanced with the growing job options within different management fields. The inclination of the students' towards developing managerial skills has been stimulating to access job opportunities and to be initiated business ventures. It can be concluded that business management studies are positively contributed towards enhancing practical knowledge that aids in the professional growth.

In context to the importance of MBA, specialisation selection in the MBA program is essential for developing 'real-time expertise or knowledge level' significant for managing performance level in the business organisation. MBA program supports improvising hard and soft skills that make possible to fulfil job roles with high-self efficiency. Personal development along with professional development in terms of the self-efficiency, confidence, communication, creative thinking and management skills improve with chosen MBA courses. It can be concluded that MBA programs are having vital importance in the personal development in terms

of the getting good/expected job and ensure job growth and security in the long run with the knowledge and skills developed during the course in particular specification choice. In context to the research objective of “importance of MBA in higher education...” it can be concluded that MBA studies in higher education are directly linked to future jobs and growth. The subject related knowledge along with practical knowledge both are significantly needed to gain position and continually achieve growth through performance efficiency. The selection of the specialisation choice as per the interests and intellectual capability is directly affected decision of the specialisation choice. It can be concluded that right selection as per the individual related factors contributes to show creativity and enhanced existing knowledge to the utmost extent.

It has been inferred in the context of second objective “to analyse the way of career choices of final semester students of MBA at Dublin business school” that decision of career choices is undertaken in specific of the factors that linked directly to the personal and professional development. The way of career choices at Dublin Business School is the significant concern that related to a student’s self-actualisation. Besides this, career choice is also executed in regard to family support, family or friends suggestions, previous year students’ experience, and market demands. It can be concluded that way of career choice is all depended on the student’s interest, family demand and market conditions. The prospect of career development is also used as a critical determinant of specialisation choices for the making selection of viable choice.

The final semester students of MBA are taken decision of career and specialisation choices on the basis of the factors including personal factors (academic performance and achievement, future life or career goals and intellectual capability and interests), social factors (family ground, financial aid, guidance, and facilities for learning/studying, relatives suggestion

and previous year students) and market/economic factors (job availability, job growth and job growth security, government aid or scholarship provisions). The decision of career and specialisation selection is not an own individual decision that detach with the external factors. Altogether, there is equal importance of personal and external factors in the choice of career and specialisation to achieve the vision of a life with self-confidence and self-assurance.

The wrong choice of career and specialisation in the final semester would have obstructed professional growth. Thus, it has been analysed that strategic planning or ways; such as market assessment in terms of growth in job options in particular fields of MBAs (financial jobs, HR related jobs, IT jobs, etc.) and decrement in jobs number in a particular MBA fields in driven of the economic changes (such as, Brexit impact on job options). The experiences of the people in the context of the growth opportunities are also undertaken as a strategic way to lessen the possibility of wrong career and specialisation choices. Altogether, strategic ways identified from secondary search and interview process has been indicated need for the reasoned planning before finalising decision for career and specialisation choices. Right career or specialisation choices have been considerably needed to fulfil life dreams and family requirements that is a return on the investment in the MBA program at the Dublin Business School. The key findings inferred in answer to the research questions have indicated that the specialisation choices of the MBA students in the final year are primarily affected by various factors that act as crucial determinants.

6.2 Recommendations

6.2.1 Recommendations for the Universities /Schools

The recommendations for the university/business school in Dublin to provide assistance to the final semester MBA students in the selection of career and specialisation choices are

exhibited as under:

- Dublin Business School management is recommended to organise counselling sessions for the final semester students of MBA to help students in the right selection with lessening the probability of wrong choices. The counselling sessions prior to the final decision would help students in making an easier selection of the best career and specialisation choices. The knowledge enhancement of the students about the job prospects and work responsibilities in particular of the different management fields (such as, finance, HR, marketing and IT) would be given good scope to the student to evaluate career and specialisation choices critically in the context of the returns on investment on MBA programs. The detailed knowledge would help in the right decision, and thus, counselling sessions at the business school for the MBA students are the vital requisite to build students' trust and good results in terms of the placements (Ali and Graham, 2006).
- The interactive session in the class among final semester students of MBA and MBA students in the previous session is to be conducted, so as to provide them exposure to state personal points or opinion prior career and specialisation choices selection. The discussion would help to familiarise with the other key factors that essential to be valued while deciding as per the other students' perspective (Ragan, 2018). This suggestion would help a student in developing a strategy for the better decision of specialisation choices that would support in getting the right job, right job and job security along with growth. The consideration to include previous year students is to share their good or bad experiences associated with the selection of career and specialisation choices.
- Final semester students at Dublin Business School are provided clear feedback of the academic performance and achievement, along with the best career and specialisation

choices. This would help students to ensure the right specialisation choices in the final semester as per the job prospects that directly links to the personal and professional development (Ragan, 2018).

6.2.2 Recommendations for the Future Work

Interview with Counsellors

The future work in the same research subject would be extended through interviewing with the counsellors at Dublin Business School in addition to that of MBA students. Interview with the counsellors would help to identify information of the career and specialisation choices for MBA students, and factors associated with the selection process of a particular choice. The inclusion of the opinions or experiences of the students and counsellors of the Dublin Business School would be beneficial to collect comprehensive data in this research study. Multiple interviews in the future work would provide reasoned ground/premise to precisely determine the way of career choices and factors influencing the choices, and strategic solutions (Creswell and Clark, 2017).

Survey Methodology for Quantitative Analysis

Besides this, it is recommended to collect quantitative data through survey method for future work. A survey in addition to the interview would be aided to collect quantitative and qualitative information that helps meeting requirement of wider and broader data. In the future work, with conducting a survey with the final semester MBA students of Dublin Business School, perspectives of the large sample population can be collected to determine common factors affecting career and specialisation choices. The structured questionnaire in the survey that would be used in the future research would help to find out factors that majorly considered by the students, and hypothesis testing to determine the relationship between the research variables

can also be possible that eventually stimulate research viability and authenticity (Olsen, 2011).

Comparative Study

The future work can also be improved through conducting a comparative study of the factors preferred for the career and specialisation choices at the Dublin Business School and the other management school. The comparative study would lead to determining whether the factors influencing the choices of specialisation of final semester MBA students are same throughout the universities or not. The knowledge explores through comparative study in this context would be useful for the future students to direct decisions in the right way, while factors information would also be useful for the business schools/universities in offerings desired career options to help students to access opportunities prevailing in the business sectors.

Extended research to determine the impact of the Personal Related factors and External/Market Factors

The future work in the similar subject of choices of specialisation and factors influencing this decision of the students pursuing MBAs would be elaborated through determining the extent to which personal related factors influenced the choices of career and specialisation choices more than external factors, or vice versa. The access of such information would lead to identifying importance and significance of a student's personal related factors or external or market-related factors on the specialisation choices, and eventual interlink to the personal and professional development. This recommended action to improve future research work would provide an opportunity to add more to the existing research study.

Overall, in the future work, it is essential to explore new areas in order to extend or add more to the existing literature studies. The data collected through new method would also be a feasible choice to enhance research comprehensiveness.

Reflection on Learning

The following personal reflection on learning presents my learnings and skill enhancement in this research project. This reflection is given good exposure to reveal a description of the project and associated feelings, knowledge and skills enhancement.

The chosen research subject is quite different and interesting on which limited studies found and thus, enquiry about students' career and specialisation choices whilst completion of MBA degree in particular of the Dublin Business School was learnable for me. This project was not provided knowledge of the MBA fields and job prospects; however, it mainly revealed factors influencing the decision of career and specialisation choices of final semester MBA students. I learnt that decision for the career and specialisation is not so easier because it is immensely affected by the factors associated with an individual and external factors.

The identified factors that directly affected the career and specialisation choices are the student interest, academic performance, achievement, life requisites or life situations, financial assistance, family suggestions and support, relatives or friends' suggestion, previous year students' feedback, market economy, job options, career growth or job growth security. The career initiation is not only an addition in the academic qualifications, while it more than that because career and specialisation choices are linked directly to the growth in living style and professional growth. I realised that the wrong choice of career and specialisation has been against success in life because it could not make it possible to achieve intended life goals in the absence of the required knowledge.

This research work has been contributing positively to skills development, and thus, I feel that the completion of this research successfully is my great achievement. Within this research, formulation of the research objectives, and further exploring relevant sources (books and journal)

form the large database has indicated my good searching skills along with analytical skills. Besides, I feel that effective managing skills are importantly needed to achieve success in terms of the good organisation of the research within time constraints. This project was gone well in terms of improvising my management skills in terms of arranging research activities and keeping integration for the logical outcomes.

The time management skill was not found good at the initial stage of the research project as I took huge time in attaining initial milestones and gradually I felt this skill had been improved. The limited studies conducted on the chosen topic had raised the issue of accessibility of relevant studies for the interpretation in respect of the research objectives. Data collection from MBA students of Dublin Business School was also a different learning experience for me because of my confidence level boosts up. The interactive discussion with the students to explore comprehensive data was revealed my active involvement in the discussion. I also feel that interpretation from the qualitative data in this research contributed to stimulating interpretation and presentation skills. Altogether, exposure for implying own skills, and stimulating knowledge level and skills was a marvellous experience that I feel in this research project. Overall, the things that went well in this research project were good qualitative search due to the support of the students of Dublin Business School that leads to high results validity. The limited secondary studies on this subject had obstructed gaining background and conceptual knowledge that was not good in terms of time management.

My subject knowledge of the factors affecting career and specialisation choices has been enhanced in this project that is not limited to the theoretical framework, but it is also associated with practical understanding. This research study familiarised me with the experiences of the MBA students of the final semester of Dublin Business School in respect of career and

specialisation choices. Personally, I realised this research project improved my skills at the good extent; however, I need to extend this project in the context of the comparative study in which carrier and specialisation choices of the students in the first semester would be compared with the final semester students. The analytical and interpretation skills could have better applied in the comparative analysis.

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Appendix: Interview Questionnaire

Question 1: What do you think about MBA program and how does it add value in higher education for students?

Question 2: What according to you are the most crucial factors that influence the career choices of final semester MBA students?

Question 3: In your opinion, what are the key factors that are considered by final semester MBA students before enrolling into distinct MBA specialisation courses?

Question 4: In your opinion, what kind of job opportunities is available with distinct MBA specialisation courses?

Question 5: What according to you are the most effective ways to avoid or minimise the wrong choices that are made by MBA students in relation to MBA specialisation courses?

Questionnaire Questions

An Enquiry into the Career and Specialisation Choices of MBA Students of Dublin Business School

General Questions

1. Gender?

- a.) Male
- b.) Female

2. Branch of Specialisation?

- a.) Human Resource
- b.) Finance
- c.) Digital Marketing
- d.) Cloud Computing

Specific Questions

3. Do you agree that correct specialisation choice is highly crucial for an MBA students' future career prospective?

- a.) Strongly Agree
- b.) Agree
- c.) Neutral
- d.) Disagree
- e.) Strongly Disagree

4. Are you satisfied with the specialisation field selection in final semester of MBA course?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No
- c.) To some extent

5. Which of below factors affected your selection of specialisation course during final semester

of MBA program?

- a.) Self-Interest
- b.) Influence from external factors
- c.) Future Career Opportunities
- d.) None of the Above

6. Which of the below given external factors have influenced your career choices during final semester of MBA?

- a.) Influenced by Friends and Seniors
- b.) Career counselling by Faculty
- c.) Considering Specific workforce demand of Multinational Companies
- d.) Influenced by Particular Business Background of Family
- e.) Others

7. Do you agree that self-interest is more important than influence from external factors while making career choices?

- a.) Yes
- b.) No
- C.) To some extent

8. In your opinion, how the ways of selection of specialisation field for MBA can be enhanced to make appropriate choices to secure future career growth?

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9. How Universities can make the students to adopt correct career choices based on future job opportunities for them?

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