FACTORS AFFECTING CAREER ASPIRATIONS
OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LEAVERS
IN BHUTAN

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ABSTRACT

Projected increases of school graduates in Bhutan and their contribution to the labour force have created concerns for the future of Bhutan’s labour market. While the number of school graduates entering the workforce is projected to increase, jobs at all levels remain static in government organizations. This study sought to investigate Bhutanese secondary school leavers’ career aspirations and factors affecting these aspirations. The principal purpose of this study was to investigate the contribution of age, gender, ability, self-concept, career goals, economic status, parental influences, experiences in school and peer influences as predictors of career aspirations. A quantitative research design was adopted, for which data was collected through simple descriptive survey questionnaires. The research sample in this study consisted of 376 class 10 and 12 students from six public higher secondary schools in Bhutan. The data analysis for this study was completed employing descriptive (frequencies, percentage, mean, standard deviation) and multiple-regression analysis.

The data indicated that overall level of career aspirations of Bhutanese secondary school leavers were at moderate. The results also revealed that there was a significant relationship between self-concept, career goals, parental influences and experiences in schools with career aspirations. However, age, gender, level of education, ability, economic status, and peer influences did not indicate a significant relationship with their career aspirations. Findings from this study suggest that there are other factors that may be impeding the actualisation of these students’ aspirations. While their aspirations are moderate, their self-efficacy in themselves to successfully accomplish the education requirements and job specifications is higher than their aspirations.

The findings from this research suggest that there is a need to include a comprehensive career planning curriculum to support students and allow them to identify goals, possible barriers, and alternative solutions for their future careers and occupations. The data also indicated that parental influence was highly significant with regard to career aspirations of Bhutanese secondary school leavers. It is thus recommended that parenting education must be expanded and given due importance throughout the country.

KEY WORDS: CAREER ASPIRATIONS/ FACTORS AFFECTING / SCHOOL LEAVERS /
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