

Discovering School Students' Career Choices in STEM via Subjective Norms

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ABSTRACT

The future workforce in Malaysia will require more than one million human capital from the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. Thus, Malaysia needs 60% of students enrolling in the Science stream to ensure the country has sufficient manpower for the current and future workforce. However, Malaysia is facing a shortage of human capital in the fields of STEM due to the poor enrolment of potential students. In order to address this disquieting issue, this study explored the subjective norms that influence secondary school students' career choices in STEM. These students are at the phase of making career choices and people who are important to them may have direct influence towards these digital natives' career choices. Six secondary school students from Peninsular Malaysia were interviewed through semi-structured interviews for this preliminary study. Five different types of subjective norms were drawn from the interviews conducted. From the obtained results, it proposed that parents and teachers are the predominant subjective norms which affect secondary school students' STEM career choices. This study may add insights to the stakeholders to design more effective educational plans with cooperation from parents and teachers' to encourage students' career choices in STEM.