Analysis of student decision factors in choosing a study program

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Abstract: This research discusses the dominant factors that influence the choice of study program for students at the Faculty of Engineering, Padang State University (FT UNP), so that it becomes a priority scale for management to improve the quality of services and student career planning based on these dominant factors. This type of research is quantitative descriptive by describing the results of the answers from the Google Form questionnaire that the respondents have filled out. The research respondents consisted of 262 FT UNP students. The research results show that the two dominant factors that determine the choice of study program for FT UNP students are interest (88.9%) and career opportunities 89.1%. Meanwhile, the factors that contribute the least to the choice of study program for students are family (46.1%) and surrounding culture (59.8%).

Keywords: *study program, dominant factors, students, career planning*

INTRODUCTION

Career is a job that has a clear and systematic picture pattern (Shaver, 2020). Career selection is a process that arises from within a person to determine the work to be occupied both now and in the future (Zulfikarijah & Mohyi, 2022). People who are successful in their careers are usually determined by a clear career plan, and are consistent in going through the stages according to the career plan that has been made

The stages of the career journey consist of 5 stages, namely the stages of growth, exploration, consolidation, maintenance and decline (Super, 1980)pupil or student, leisurite, citizen, worker, spouse, homemaker, parent, and pensioner, positions with associated expectations that are occupied at some time by most people, and other less common roles such as those of criminal, reformer, and lover. A Life-Career Rainbow is presented as a means of helping conceptualize mul-tidimensional careers, the temporal involvement in, and the emotional commitment to, each role. Self-actualization in various roles, role conflicts, and the determinants of role selection and of role performance are discussed. The use of the Rainbow in career education and in counseling is briefly considered. A paper with a title such as this might be expected to be one of two sorts of articles: seeking either to formulate a theory of career development from which hypotheses might be derived and tested, or merely attempting to describe what careers are and how they develop. Those who have proposed theories have, almost always, dealt with occupational choice rather than with career development: Bordin, Nachmann, and Segal (1963. The growth stage is before a person enters the age of 15. In the growth stage, the child will see a figure that is admired and close to him. If he admires his father's figure, the tendency of a child will dream of having a job like his father when he grows up. Likewise, if what he admires is his teacher

at school, then the tendency is that the child will aspire to become a professional teacher like the character he admires (Saputra & Sugiyono, n.d.). The stages of growth, aspirations and career directions of children begin to grow and usually tend to change depending on what they admire (Lestari, Maylita, Hidayah, & Junitawati, 2020). Career exploration stage, is in the age range of 15 years to 24 years (Hunt & Rhodes, 2021)1996. In Indonesia, this age is the stage of a person being at the high school and tertiary level of education. When most children reach the age of 15, they are able to determine which education they will pursue, whether to continue on to a public school or a vocational school, although it is possible that the cost of education is a very important thing to consider when deciding which education to enter. The age range of 16-18 years a child has started to consistently think about and explore the career stages that must be passed according to the ideals he wants. For example, someone wants to be an architect, so that child will try to get into the Faculty of Engineering from a well-known university and has a recognized *trade record* in producing professional architects. The effort that is generally done is to maximize children's activities to follow tutoring to enter college. When someone has studied at a tertiary institution, in order to be accepted at work, graduates often add other informal education related to the competencies required by job providers. Padang State University, has facilitated the Competency Certification Institute, so that engineering graduates who have graduated are given the opportunity to take the expertise certificate test in order to add legal recognition to the competencies that FT UNP alumni have.

The career consolidation stage starts from the age of 25 years to 44 years (Kosine & Lewis, 2008). Someone in a period of career consolidation generally has found the right position with the planned career. In the stabilization stage, a person is trusted to occupy a strategic position in the work environment. At this time, someone will try to maintain their position by showing loyalty and professionalism at work. Not a few people also start to open their own business opportunities to further increase their capacity to achieve their dreams. The career maintenance stage is in the age range of 45 years to 65 years. This age is included in the final productive age phase. The tendency of people will maintain what is already there and prepare themselves to enter retirement age. In this phase, a person has prepared replacement resources, until the decline stage comes, where a person's age has entered over 65 years.

Many factors determine a person's career apart from themselves (Kasan & Agustina, 2022). Factors that influence career development, especially in continuing education are family factors, interests, financial resources, self-capacity, career opportunities, culture, colleagues. The tendency of children to see the figure of a family member they admire. If there is someone in the family who is successful in doing business, generally the children will also join in the business. If a child sees the figure of his parents as a teacher, then generally his child will also have a career as a teacher. Interest is the dominant factor in determining a career. Someone will feel comfortable if they carry out work or education according to their interests. Financial sources are very influential in career planning. Qualified finances will be used to choose education from the best institutions even though it requires a large fee. Qualified finances will enable a person to take part in various competency trainings that support the careers that have been programmed. Self-capacity is developed through education, both formal and informal education. Self-capacity is an indicator of a person's ability to plan and take action as needed to achieve the desired achievement (Susilowati, Latifah, Mahmud,

& Aeni, 2022). Cultural values have an impact on the factors that influence young people's career choices (Akosah-Twumasi, Emeto, Lindsay, Tsey, & Malau-Aduli, 2018). The culture of the people in Sumatra is usually more inclined to choose to become civil servants.

Career planning that is mature and consistent in carrying it out provides an opportunity to avoid unemployment. Career planning is inseparable from the education one will enter. Education is one of the stages in pursuing a career. In Indonesia, students at the senior high school level generally have not planned their career paths carefully. For students whose economic abilities are middle and above tend to continue their education to tertiary institutions, and for those who do not, will stop and try to get a job in accordance with the high school certificate they have. students who study at vocational schools, also do not always consistently undergo career stages in the vocational path. When they graduate from vocational schools, there are also those who continue their education on the academic track.

Education provides knowledge and skills for someone to enter the desired job field. The choice of educational path is not always consistent because of the career path that has been planned, but also because of the opportunity to choose available study programs and the cost of education. The choice of a study program by a person takes into account several factors, such as greater opportunities to be accepted in the study program, the cost of education is much cheaper and the study program is familiar and often the target of job providers. The problem of pursuing a career for most people in Indonesia is more determined when they will complete their education in college. When they are about to finish college, only then does someone glance at the job that will go according to their interests. Based on the observations observed so far, it was found that students who study in the engineering education route at FT UNP are reluctant to choose a career in education to become teachers. Even though the vision and mission of the engineering education study program is how the study program is able to prepare prospective professional education personnel in the field of engineering. Students who take the diploma three education path, after completing their education, instead they continue on to undergraduate education study programs at FT UNP on the grounds that being a civil servant teacher is more prosperous and lives more relaxed than being an employee in industry.

This phenomenon is unique, because there are students who study from the first year to the final year in the undergraduate education pathway who are not interested in becoming teachers, while students who study in the third diploma pathway generally continue to the undergraduate education study program. This predicts errors in choosing a study program. Mistakes in choosing a study program are an indication that students do not want to pursue a career in accordance with their field of education. As a result, the output targets and vision and mission achievements set by the study program were not achieved optimally. Based on interviews conducted with alumni of Automotive Engineering Education (PS-TO) FT UNP who are still not working, they revealed that they are still waiting to be accepted to work in industry. Even though the need for teachers in the Riau, Riau Islands and Bengkulu areas is largely unfilled, 12% of PS-PTO alumni are reluctant to become teachers and instead decide not to work. The opportunity for alumni of education study programs to enter industry is very small, while the opportunity for non-education alumni, apart from the opportunity to work in large industries, the opportunity to become teachers through the Teacher Professional Program (PPG) is also large, so this is a challenge for the management of education study programs in achieving its vision and mission for graduates.

Choosing a study program that is not in line with your interests will result in decreased fighting power and unpreparedness for the pressure to complete the assignments given by the lecturer. Students who choose a study program according to their interests have higher fighting power and effort, which has an impact on learning outcomes (Hasanah, 2023). Education is embedded in the context of lifelong learning. The main aim of education is preparation for life, in childhood and adolescence, but also in adulthood. The career education approach theoretically contributes to changes in the educational vision and mission of educational development funds (Dandara, 2014). This research contributes to providing input to faculties and departments to improve student education services within the FT UNP environment. Research related to the analysis of factors that determine the choice of study program has never been carried out by FT UNP, so that students who experience academic problems find it difficult to provide solutions that can be immediately accepted by students.

If someone likes their choice, they will tend to pay more attention to it. Likewise, if someone likes the study program of their choice, then their attitude will be very positive so that they are successful in that study program and have planned the career choice they like in accordance with the skill competencies of the knowledge they learn in the study program of their choice (Ernawati et al., 2022). The higher a person's interest in learning, the greater the effort made to successfully study in the chosen study program (Dahliani, Rahmatan, & Djufri, 2020). Not all students like their chosen study program. From the observations and interviews conducted, of the 10 respondents, 2 people answered that their current study program was not their choice, so their attitude towards studying was the reason their Achievement Index was problematic and even after completing their education, they entered the world of work with a mediocre GPA. also becomes an obstacle in career planning. There are several factors that determine a student's choice of a student program.

Research conducted by (Nurfia, 2017) on Office Administration students at Makassar State University revealed that family factors were the most influential factor in student selection of study programs. Saputro (2017) reveals that campus image and job opportunities are the dominant factors for students in choosing a mathematics study program at Pontianak University. By knowing the dominant factors that play a role in determining the choice of study program, it will have an impact on the career path and attitudes of students while studying. This information can also be input on how the campus, especially the Faculty of Engineering, UNP maximizes the dominant factors so as to speed up the student study period and assist in student career planning. Educational institutions are expected to play a more active role in directing the careers of their students. This article aims to determine the dominant factors determining student career decisions to choose a further study path to the FT UNP.

METHODS

The type of research used is quantitative descriptive research. The research subjects consisted of 262 students at FT UNP from the Departments of Electronic Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Automotive Engineering, Civil Engineering and Mining Engineering. The data collection technique is through a survey by providing a questionnaire in the form of a Linkert scale selection of question items accessed via Google Form. Data analysis uses percentage techniques, which appear in chart form on the Google form that is circulated. Even though the questionnaire answers given by respondents were

given 5 choices, in the discussion, the answers strongly agree and agree will be combined by accumulating the two answers on the scale. Likewise, the answer choices of disagree and strongly disagree will also be combined into 1. This is done to make it easier for researchers to draw conclusions. So in the discussion there will only be 3 answers, namely agree, disagree and disagree.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Interest. The choice of study program is the interest of the respondents. 94.4% agreed that choosing a study program as one of the stages of career planning was the interest of the respondents themselves. Students who choose study programs based on their interests, 88.9% feel very satisfied with the study programs they choose. Interest will affect a person's attitude in responding to something. Students who have a high interest in the study program they choose will show much better learning motivation than students who are not interested (Yanuarti & Rosmayanti, 2019). Learning motivation refers to the desire of students to be involved and play an active role in learning activities so that the desired learning goals are achieved (Masrun & Rusdinal, 2022). Interest can be grown by providing motivation, so that it is hoped that the lecturer as the teacher will always provide motivation so that students' interest in learning is higher (Handayani, 2017).

Related to the interest there are students who are not interested in the choice of study program they have taken, the study programs in the FT UNP environment in responding to things like this are to provide opportunities for students to be able to move to other study programs, but this is still a bit one percentage. Not all study programs are willing to accept students who transfer. Because each study program determines the criteria for accepting transfer students from other study programs. If these conditions are not met, the study program that will accept will reject the student. The requirements set are generally related to a minimum GPA of 3.

The impact of a person's disinterest in the chosen study program is that the grades tend to be low, and the desire to come to campus to study is also lacking. Another solution that is carried out by the study program for students who are not interested in choosing their study program is by calling their PA lecturer and giving directions, then if it is not possible to

Figure 1. Interest
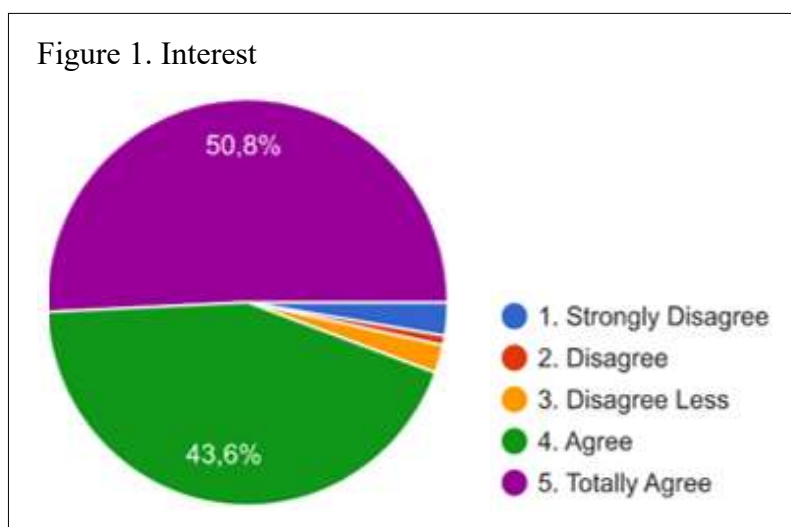
move to another study program, then this can be done by providing motivation and direction and guidance. which can make students more confident and confident in the choice of study program they are taking.

It is supported by research (Yuliawan & Hardini, 2022)which states that interest greatly influences decision making in choosing a study program. In general, every student chooses a study program based on careful considerations (Istiqomah, Hariani, & Afian, 2018). However, there are still many students who choose the wrong study program, the reason that makes them choose the wrong major is because they follow their friends. Initially, they considered it according to their interests, but many students finally chose majors so that they could be with their friends, not even sure that the chosen major would be liked. When they entered college and started following the situation with higher education, they realized there was something they didn't like about the majors. But there are also many of them who don't want to move because they feel it's a waste of time choosing and studying a new major. Thus many students go through lectures as they please, causing the results obtained to be not optimal. So it can be concluded that if someone chooses something according to their interests, it will make it easier for them to run it, thereby encouraging them to be more active and diligent, and provide motivation in completing it, in contrast to running something that is not their interest, most people will feel pressure and not few in the end decide to stop in the middle of the road or change majors (Leri, Santi, & Rosita, 2022). Not only interest, the environment where students live is also very influential on student learning outcomes.

For example, students who live in a dormitory or dormitory will have much better learning outcomes because all activities are scheduled and supervision is carried out by coaches or seniors who make them more focused, different from students who live in boarding houses. , where they tend to be more free and without an activity schedule, so that many of them also have poor learning outcomes. (Kusuma, Arianto, & Finthariasari, 2021) also revealed that prospective students in choosing a study program are influenced by their own interest, motivation, expected future work and learning environment.

The solution that can be done to increase interest in learning is self-efficacy, self-regulation during learning. Starting with setting study time and other positive activities. Conduct discussions with PA lecturers or course lecturers regarding lectures, make lists of material or subjects that are not mastered so they can study together or ask for additional courses from the lecturer concerned, learn from various sources, and of course get a support system (support from parents, peers), and others (Lestari, 2021)

Family. Respondents said career development was related to the education they were currently pursuing, 46.1 % was determined by the family and 30.3% said that the family did not play a role in determining the study program the respondents chose. The role of parents in educating is so important because it is through this family that a person's life is formed (Wuldandari, Wijayanti, & Saliman, 2019). A person's career is influenced by family careers, both by the career of the father, mother, and siblings (Islam, Rahman, & Nibir, 2021). Parents have an important role in the educational development and career journey of their children and their children's professional planning (Rubamande & Mukadi, 2021).

Decisions regarding the choice of study programs for students are also determined by successful family members who serve as role models. The family is the first person who will become a public figure for children in planning their future. In the selection of education as one of career planning, parents also play a very important role. Parents in educating their

Figure 2. Family
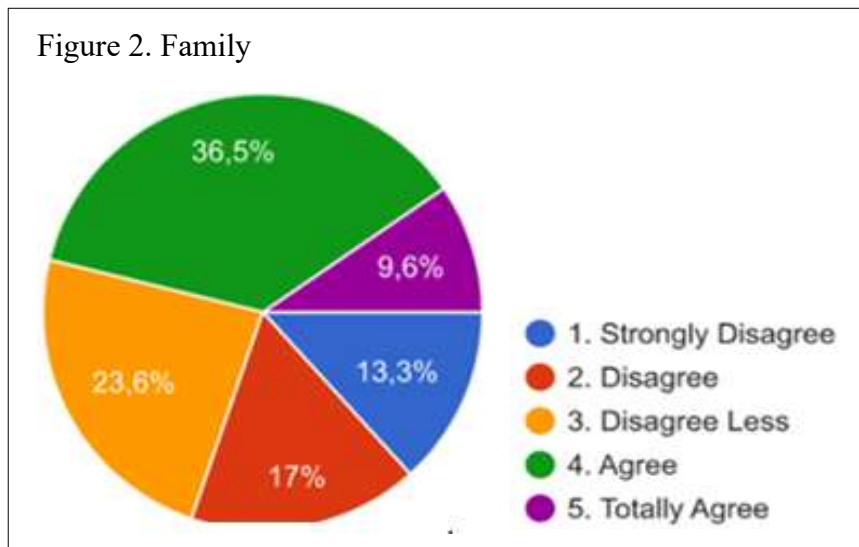
children will have a major influence on children's achievements, and become the first and foremost educational institution. Good coaching and attention is given to children, it will improve the quality of children's education (Pratiwi, 2017).

Children who do not have parents have lower academic achievement than children who have parents. This is because children who have parents receive attention and moral and material support from their parents, so that children become enthusiastic, focused and achieve well in learning (Assefa, Tilwani, Moges, & Shah, 2022)a convergent mixed-method research design was used. Accordingly, both qualitative and quantitative data were collected simultaneously, and the analysis was drawn upon both strands in search of patterns. Numbers of the study sample were n = 436 and the selection was bounded into three categories of subjects such as school principals (n = 22. Parents' education is also a factor in the child's career planning. Parents with a higher level of education tend to provide input to their children regarding the career prospects of several study programs that can be alternative choices for their children. Meanwhile, parents with a lower level of education tend to follow

Figure 3. Close relatives
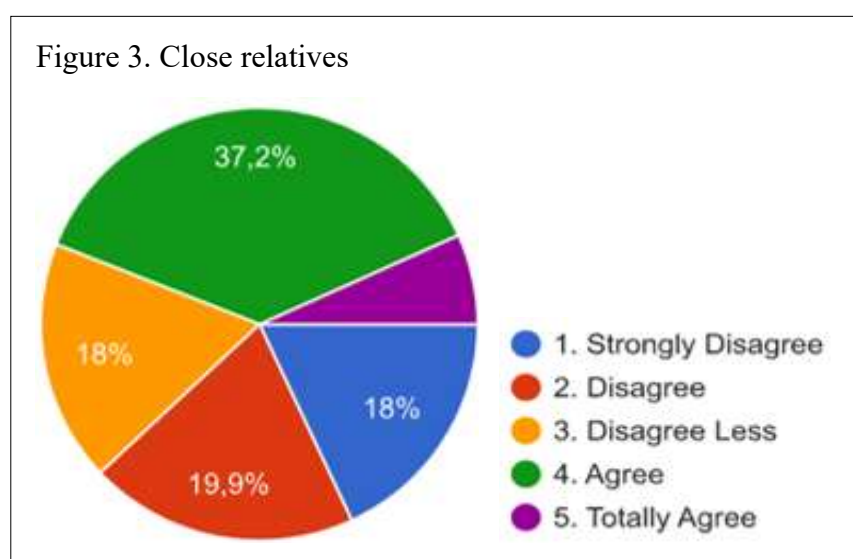
their children's choices, because for those whose children want further studies with a higher education than them, this is already a joy for them (Perkins, 2020). The socio-economic life of parents is very decisive in student career planning.
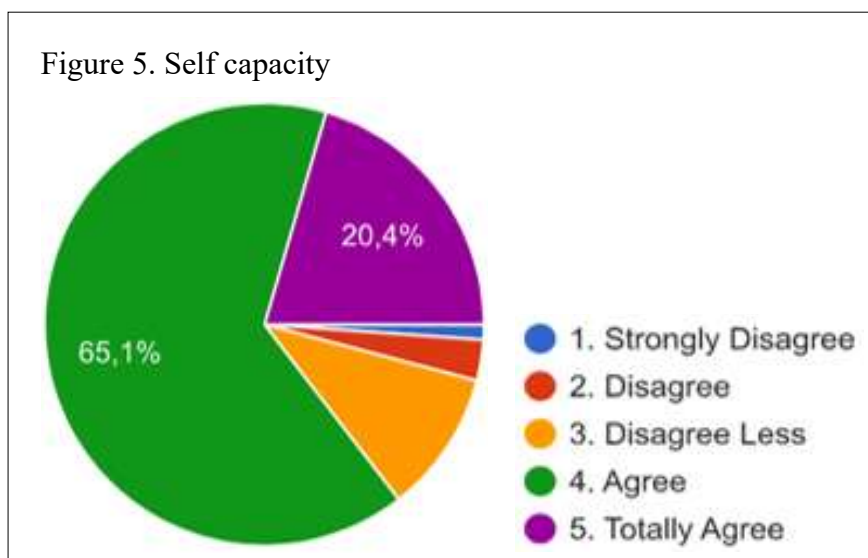
As many as 37.2% of respondents said the study program chosen was input from family and relatives, while 37.9% said the study program they chose was not input from relatives/family but was on their own initiative. If there are relatives who are successful in a particular study program, there is a tendency for other family members to choose the same study program, assuming that the chances of success in a career will be greater because evidence from one of the family relatives already exists. (Nelissa, Astuti, & Martunis, 2018) revealed two dominant factors that influenced students in the process of selecting majors in further education, namely personality factors with a percentage of 92% and parental factors with a percentage of 76%, while peer factors had an insignificant influence on students in the process of selecting further education majors with a percentage of 33%. Family factors for students in Malaysia are the dominant factor , for Malaysian students in deciding which study program they choose (bin Dahari & bin Ya, 2011). This research is different from the data provided by FT UNP students, where family is not the dominant factor for FT UNP students in choosing the study program they are interested in.

Figure 4. Finance
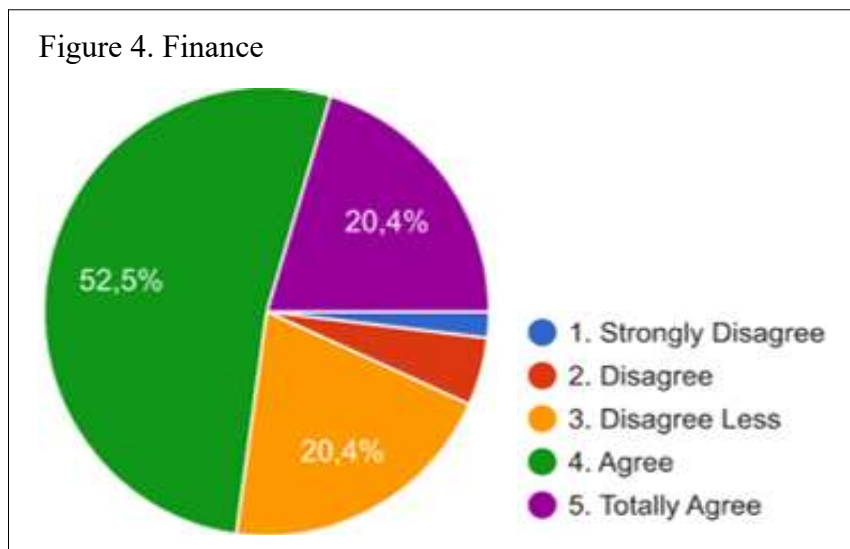
Finance. The choice of study program was based on the family's financial ability are said by 72.9% of respondents. Single Tuition Fee (UKT) set by UNP for both regular and independent programs, including UKT which is the cheapest on average in the Sumatra region. Entrance contributions for independent program students are also relatively small compared to other universities, and are allowed to be paid in installments over 2 semesters. Even though there are scholarship programs from the government and the campus, there are also many enthusiasts to get these scholarships and there are also many documents that must be prepared. Someone deciding to choose a particular study program usually has also surveyed the costs incurred during college, at least the semester fee (Single Tuition Fee) is known and agreed upon.

A research study conducted by Vadivel, Alam, Nikpoo, and Ajanil (2023) concluded that the relationship between economic status and student achievement was comparable. Students with low socioeconomic status have low academic achievement compared to students from middle and upper economic status. Students with low socioeconomic status are more likely to work in the market as workers at an early age. It has been found that parents with low socioeconomic background are less interested in educating their children and directing their children's education. Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more focused on work than continuing their studies after completing their secondary education. such learners end up in unskilled, low-paid jobs.

Research conducted by (Gusman, Fitria, & Rohana, 2021) revealed that the socio-economic conditions of parents had a significant effect on student learning outcomes. The value of parents' socio-economic contribution to academic achievement is 15.3%, while the rest is influenced by other factors. The results of this study indicate that there is a significant influence of parents' socio-economic on student achievement. Parents' economic conditions improve, so their children's academic achievement will also increase. Directly, the socio-economic conditions of parents have a role in improving the quality of the teaching and learning process. This is because parents are able to fulfill their children's learning needs. Students who have qualified facilities and infrastructure make their enthusiasm for learning increase and the achievement of learning outcomes also increases.

Figure 5. Self capacity

Self. Capacity. As many as 85.5% of respondents said the choice of study program was adjusted to their abilities. Respondents considered that the knowledge and skills they acquired during college could be practiced in the field and needed when they were looking for work. UNP in increasing students' self-capacity has set a minimum standard when students are about to graduate, one of which is having English language skills with a minimum TOEFL of 425 points. *Soft skill* abilities are expected to provide opportunities for students to get greater job opportunities. UNP has also set up a competency test center, so that when students graduate they are also provided with a certificate of expertise from the competency test they

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took. Competency certificates owned by students are able to increase students' self-capacity and facilitate opportunities to get a job.

Students' self-capacity can also be increased through apprenticeship and independent learning programs. The internship program provides real practical experience for students on theoretical concepts that have been studied in lectures. Internships provide new experiences so that students get to know the environment and work culture that exist in the industry, so that with this capital students have the capital to recognize what kind of work culture is expected by the industry when they are about to enter a period of looking for work. Self-capacity indicates a person's ability to organize and take action as needed in order to achieve the desired achievement (Susilowati et al., 2022).

Figure 6. Career opportunities
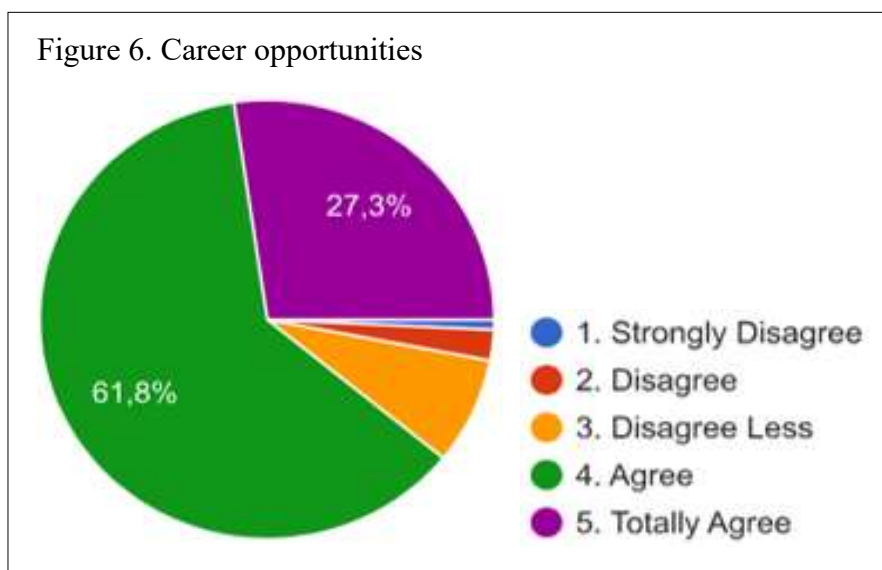
Career Opportunities. There are 89.1% of respondents believe that their job opportunities are greater by continuing their education in the study program they are currently taking. Eighty nine point nine percent of respondents believe the study program they choose will help them develop in their future careers. Career opportunities are related to the speed at which job seekers obtain job vacancy information. UNP has established a Career Center as a forum for information on job fairs for alumni and students. Various job vacancy information is shared every day through the UNP Career Center website. Based on a survey of respondents, 53.6% of students did not know the existence of a UNP career center. They know more about career opportunities related to job information from what's app groups, lecturer posts and alumni posts on social media. The UNP career center was actually introduced to students when they took entrepreneurship courses which are mandatory subjects for all UNP students. It's just that this kind of miss communication could have happened, it could have been that the entrepreneurship lecturer had forgotten to provide information on the career center at UNP or students could have forgotten this information. Davey, Evans, and Stupans (2006) stated that job opportunities are the dominant factor for pharmacy students in deciding to continue their pharmaceutical education in college. The same thing was also expressed by Agrey and Lampadan (2014), research conducted on 261 students in downtown Thailand,

revealed that the dominant factor that determines students choose a study program is job opportunities from the study program in the future, so students must budget their education according to income. themselves, if necessary assisted by holding special training programs to overcome educational and social barriers so that minimum employment standards can be met (Najar & Yousuf, 2019).

Figure 7. Culture
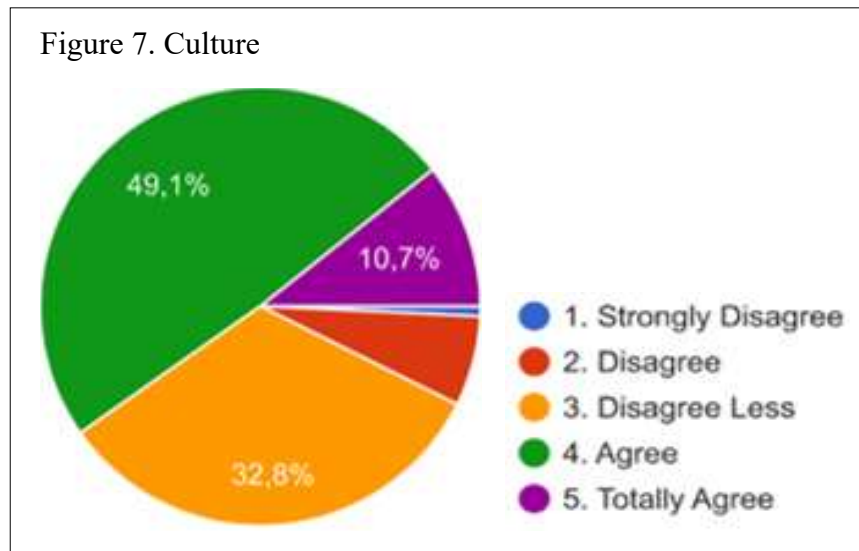
There are 59.8% believe that the study program they choose is because the local culture says it will be easy to get job opportunities. The community is indeed more formed of stigma, that graduates of engineering study programs are more easily accepted by jobs compared to social fields. The field of engineering studies is considered to have greater job opportunities because they can work in both engineering and administrative fields. An example of an automotive engineering study program, alumni not only work as tool operators, supervisors , workshop heads, sales, technicians but can also work as administrative staff in the automotive industry. It's different if the alumni of the social science program are administrative, the work that can be done is limited to administration and marketing, but to become a technician, heavy equipment operator, it won't be possible. One example of a comparison is according to (Kantamneni, Dharmalingam, Orley, & Kanagasingam., 2018). Americans of Asian descent usually mostly choose careers in technology, mathematics and physics, or tend to choose investigative, realistic careers, and choose jobs that are considered analytical or logical. Meanwhile, our society tends to listen more to the stigma that is widespread in the general public.

Peer Support. There are 87.6% said the study program they chose was highly supported by their peers. Colleagues can trigger students to study harder and also help them think more creatively (Owusu , Owusu, Fiorgbor, & Atakora, 2021). Their fellow college friends provide mutual support to help the success of the respondents in studying in the study program. Johnson argues that the lecture environment affects career choices because they often interact, so that such influences usually occur because of a closer relationship between them (Maxmillian, Nkemanjen, & Achankeng, 2020)North West Region of Cameroon. Indicators of Environmental Factors were peer groups, school environment and religious

Figure 8. Peer support
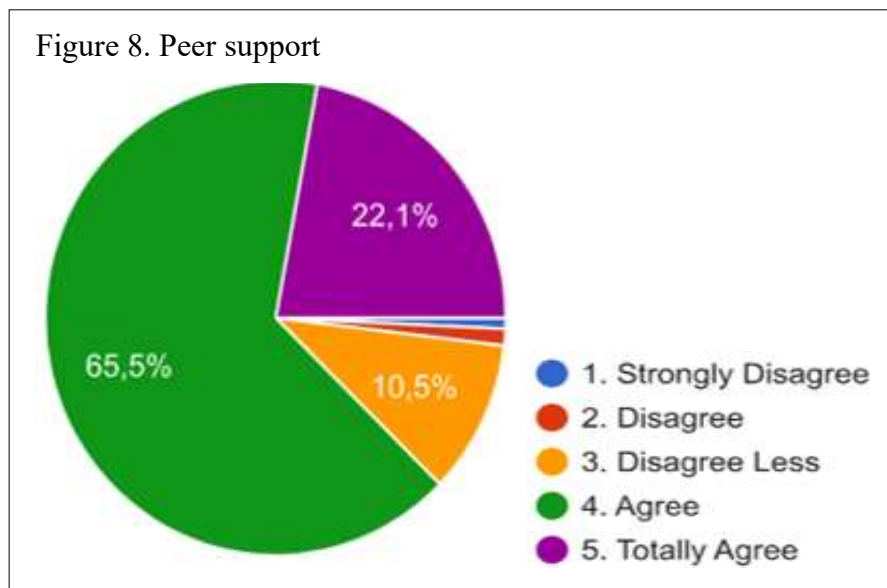
groups that were used to test the relationships between environmental factors and students Career Choices. Descriptive survey design was used with the sample of 140 students randomly selected from three secondary schools (Government Bilingual High School Ndop, St. Mary Catholic Secondary School Ndop and Comprehensive High school Ndop. The colleagues in this study are the respondent's friends both on campus and in the neighborhood where they live. The environment is very decisive in one's success. An environment that has high learning motivation will cause students who live in that environment to also have high learning motivation. To improve student career planning in a mature way, the role of lecturers and study programs needs to be improved on how to be involved in building a positive student environment, building collaboration between students so that they are equally successful in learning.

Özoğlu, Gür, and Coşkun (2015) revealed that the selection of study programs by students is determined by the success factors of students studying abroad. Apart from *the influencers* of students who study abroad, factors of job opportunities and natural demographics are also factors that are taken into account by students in choosing a study program. This is also expressed by Aguado, Laguador, and Deligero (2015), where students decide to choose the Maritime Study Program because of the success of previous students in the study program. There are many factors that cause someone to decide to choose a particular study program in tertiary institutions, it's just that in this article not all of them have been explored in relation to other factors that cause someone to decide to study in a particular study program so that further studies are needed in the future.

CONCLUSION

The dominant factors that determine FT UNP students' decision to choose a study program are interest, finances, personal capacity, career opportunities and colleagues. These five factors determine more than 70% of someone's decision to choose a study program. The factors of interest and belief that the chosen study program has good career opportunities are the 2 main factors that are most dominant in students deciding to choose a study program. Family and

cultural factors are the smallest factors that students consider when choosing a study program. The dominant factors in students' choice of study program can be used as points that need to be considered in service management by the study program management team.

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