

EXPLORING EDUCATIONAL HORIZONS: A COMPREHENSIVE EXPLORATION OF ENGLISH GRADUATES' DECISION-MAKING FOR MPHIL STUDIES, IN PAKISTAN

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Abstract

This research explores the factors behind the persuasion of MPhil studies by English graduates, the financial and social dynamics faced by them and their views on the education system of Pakistan. Students have to make an important decision after completing their sixteen years of education (BS/MA), whether they want to study further and pursue an MPhil degree or begin their full-time professional careers. In this study, the researcher has collected data from 150 MPhil students of many universities across Pakistan. The researcher's primary concern is to understand why the MPhil students are pursuing this degree and to what extent the family, friends and society has influenced them to pursue this degree. The study explores if this decision is driven by personal aspirations or imposed by societal, familial, or other external pressures. Financial stability emerges as a significant factor in students' decision-making processes. The researchers assess the extent to which all these factors influence their choices. This research uses both qualitative and quantitative approach to analyze the data. The theory of planned behavior is used to analyze decision making and SPSS software is used for statistical analysis. The results showed that external factors played a vital role in the persuasion of MPhil degree. The responses of some students showed that there is lack of counselling about education and career, therefore 20 to 30% of the students have no clear career guidelines.

Keywords: English graduates, MPhil, full-time Professional career Theory of Planned Behavior; Attitude, Behavioral intentions, Educational Improvements.

Introduction:

Education is an important part of human life and more and more people are trying to get more education in current era. Some decades ago, it was very unusual to find many graduates in Pakistan but now as the value and demand of education has increased, a lot of students are trying to get more and more education. But sometimes it is quite obvious that this demand is not because of interest or research passions but instead of these students are taking admission in higher classes due to societal pressure, job requirements and other factors.

In Pakistan, the pursuit of higher education in English studies, particularly at the MPhil level, has witnessed a significant rise over the past decade. As the global importance of English continues to grow across academic, professional, and cultural domains, many English graduates in Pakistan are opting for advanced degrees to deepen their knowledge and improve their career prospects. An MPhil in English not only allows students to engage critically with literature, linguistics, and language pedagogy, but also prepares them for roles in academia, research, media, civil services, and beyond. With universities increasingly offering specialized research tracks and interdisciplinary modules, the MPhil has emerged as a stepping stone toward both intellectual enrichment and doctoral studies.

The decision-making process for pursuing an MPhil in English, however, is shaped by a variety of factors, ranging from academic interests and institutional reputation to job market demands, personal aspirations, and socio-cultural pressures. In Pakistan, where higher education is often seen as a gateway to upward mobility, students' choices are influenced not only by passion for the subject but also by pragmatic considerations such as employability, funding opportunities, and family expectations. Despite the growing number of MPhil programs across the country, there remains a gap in understanding how English graduates navigate these decisions.

MPhil is a postgraduate degree in Pakistan and students take admission in MPhil after completing (their sixteen years of education) Masters or Bachelors in their respective field. This research includes data from MPhil English students of some universities of Pakistan and evaluate their responses to analyze the reasons as to why they have preferred an MPhil degree over a full-time Professional career. Some students might also be doing some part time jobs while most of the students are only pursuing their MPhil degree. The researcher's main concern is to understand why the MPhil students are pursuing this degree and what are the main factors behind this selection? Did they select this by their personal wish or was it an imposed decision by the society, family or other influencers? There is another important reason which contributes to the decision-making process of students which is financial support; the researcher will also identify to what extent does this factor involve in their decision-making process.

Pakistan is a developing country and it has also been facing a lack of employment and one of the main reasons is the exploitation of the employees. Many students even after completing their degrees are incompatible for any job as most of the times the education and learned things are very irrelevant and old school. In this situation, it is assumed that when students fail to find a suitable job after 16 years of education, they take admission in MPhil without any interest in the research and study. They think of MPhil degree as a gateway to different careers and this is due to the lack of the proper counselling and pressure of various factors of the society.

The goal of this research is to analyze how far the young generation have freedom and choice and how many of them are pursuing their degrees for different reasons. The researcher aims to find out if the graduated students have any opinion about the specific curriculum they have been taught, or with the teaching methodology or the policies of HEC, and how that has impacted their decision regarding MPhil.

Some studies have been conducted to analyze trends among the students of various classes to analyze and predict their plans and ideas in near future.

Research Gap

There have been many researches being conducted but the specialty of this research is that it deals with the students of MPhil English in Pakistan particularly and to analyze the factors which have influenced them to pursue this degree and their views on the education system comprehensively. Such research can be conducted on the students of BS or MA English but they have not decided yet and even if they have it is not certain. But this research has more significance because it deals with people (students) who have already taken the decision, so they can tell more accurately the factors and their influence on their decision. As we are applying the theory of planned behavior and it includes the influence of family, friends, mentors and social factors and perceived behavior, so the students who are currently pursuing their degrees in MPhil are the best source for data collection to deal with this phenomenon.

While existing researches have examined various aspects of career decision-making, choices made by graduates of English departments. This study seeks to address these circumstances so that it can be helpful for the by examining the specific factors that contribute to the decision to pursue an MPhil in linguistics or literature versus entering the workforce professionally.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB):

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) basically focuses on different aspects of human beings to analyze the formulation of a decision. It analyzes the role and importance of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in predicting behavioral intentions and actions. Ajzen's work in his theory asserts that if individuals possess a favorable mindset towards a particular subject, they will endeavor to actively participate in it. They will also take into account societal acceptance or rejection, and hold the belief that they have the ability to regulate their own conduct and behavior. Many researches have been done to study the applications of TPB to understand decision-making in various situations and domains, including education, studies, and career choices (Ajzen, 1991; Armitage & Conner, 2001).

One is more likely to carry out a specific behavior if they have a stronger intention to do so. The degree to which an individual has a positive or negative opinion of a particular behavior is known as their attitude towards the behavior, which makes up the second construct. Behavioral beliefs and outcome assessments make up attitude. The third construct is the subjective norm, which is social pressure to engage in or refrain from engaging in a particular behavior. Subjective norms are the result of normative beliefs combined with compliance motivation. Additionally, perceived Behavioral control. Subjective norms are the result of normative beliefs combined with compliance motivation. Another important component of the TPB is perceived Behavioral control, which is people's assessment of how simple or complex it is to carry out the behavior of interest.

Aims and objectives

The aim of this study is to analyze the factors which influence English graduates to pursue MPhil studies and the improvements which should be made for better academic learning and teaching in this modern era.

Objectives of this study includes:

- To analyze how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control can affect English students' decision-making when deciding between a full-time professional career and an MPhil in English.
- To evaluate how much the decision to pursue an MPhil English degree is influenced by financial concerns and potential job opportunities.
- To determine the degree's perceived value for their future professional careers, either during or after obtaining their BS or MA degrees.

Research Questions:

1. How do Attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavior control (encompassing the opinions of self, family, peers and society) impact the decision-making process of English students regarding MPhil in English or starting a full-time professional career?
2. To what extent do the other factors such as financial considerations and future career prospects influence the decision of pursuing MPhil in English degree?

Literature Review:

Many studies have been conducted to analyze the tendency between students of different fields and classes about the future goals, aim and aspirations. These researches provide in-depth information and psychology and condition of the students or workers or others who are the subject of the research. Particularly, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) has been utilized by many researches to analyze decision making process in various areas and on different subjects.

The decision-making process among graduates, particularly those holding degrees in English, is a multifaceted and significant area of study. There can be various factors that influence students to choose between pursuing an MPhil English and starting a full-time professional career, and understanding these factors can be very helpful from both practical and theoretical perspectives.

This literature review explores existing research related to career decision-making, emphasizing the TPB. So, in this regard, a study conducted by Kusumawati (2013) regarding the selection process of students, at an Indonesian university, has revealed that the influence of family plays a significant role alongside other essential factors such as financial obligations, institutional reputation, geographical proximity, and career opportunities. Consequently, it is expected that individuals will opt for the educational programs offered at UiTM Kelantan if they receive encouragement from influential figures in their lives. This particular observation leads to the formulation of the second hypothesis, which states that. "The subjective perception of societal norms has a positive impact on the inclination to choose an educational course at UiTM Kelantan (Kusumawati, 2013).

A research was done by Sierra Terina Keung in Polynesian on student-athletes' (footballers)) to analyze motivation for improving academic results, while taking a part in Division I football in college. This study also explored the extent of influence of subjective norms, attitude, and perceived behavioral control (Icek Ajzen B. L., 1992) on the motivation to achieve good GPA. In addition to this family obligation, ethnic identity, and cultural values were also evaluated as potential contributors to subjective norms. There were 70 Polynesian football student athletes as participants in this study. The findings helped the scholars and administrators for their conduct (Keung, 2014).

After that Edicreia Andrade dos Santos (2016) conducted another notable research which shows that the inspiration and motivation of students to choose an accounting degree or to start a profession in the respected field is very much impacted by their understanding of their own value. Consequently, it is expected that individuals who possess the necessary self-confidence will opt for an educational program offered by UiTM Kelantan with the aim of confronting and overcoming various challenges. Consequently, the subsequent statement presents the third hypothesis: H3. An individual's inclination to enroll in a particular course of study at UiTM Kelantan is favorably influenced by their conviction that they can exercise control over their own conduct. (Edicreia Andrade dos Santos, To Pursue a Career in Accounting or not: a Study Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, 2016). So, it can be seen that the previous studies have indicated that perceived behavioral control plays a significant role in the decision to pursue accounting and entrepreneurship courses (Edicreia Andrade dos Santos, To Pursue a Career in Accounting or not: a Study Based on the Theory of Planned Behavior, 2016) . For example, as this study conducted by found that student self-confidence is a major motivating factor in course selection.

Another study was conducted, in the state of Paraná, to analyze the student's tendency to pursue a career in the field of accounting in which 691 students' intention who graduated in Parana, from different public universities. This study was based on the (TPB) theory of planned behavior. Following collection, the data were assessed using methods from structural equation analysis and descriptive statistics. The main findings show that attitude, subjective norm, and perceived Behavioral control variables affect students' intention of going into a profession in accounting. The investigation's hypotheses were verified in most mesoregions. The largest and most developed cities in Paraná correspond to the six mesoregions whose samples were confirmed. The results in the 10 mesoregions under study explain an intention variance which ranges from 27.84% to 64.31%.

The results helped to clarify the characteristics of accounting graduates from public universities and gave the managers of such institutions tools to analyses differentiating strategies in connection to course curricula and methods, depending on the location. The regulatory agencies could also apply the results as a starting point for detail studies on the factors influencing the aspirations of aspiring people and establish regulations that direct educational institutions in creating syllabus with relevant and consistent material for the companies or business (Edicreia Andrade dos Santos, 2018).

If we look at the educational policies and their importance and deficiencies a research conducted in 2019, Raza, Mehr Mohsin; Farooq, Muhammad and three other writers is quite significant in which they analyzed the education policies of Pakistan and why new policies should be suggested. It was qualitative research, in which data was collected in document analysis form, semi structure interviews and focus groups, but in this research only questionnaire has been used to get the data but the number of students is far more to generalize the answers and increase their validity. They have selected participants from different levels for example from MPhil, PhD and even the lecturers the participants in this research were 5 PhD, 15 MPhil scholars and 5 teachers with PhD degrees in educational field. They all participated in this semi structured interview. The results of this study showed that the higher education institutions, lack of financial aids, incompatible technological instruments and methods etc. are major hindrances in the path of a fast and efficiently growing education system. The suggestions included the empowerment of HEC and to give administrative and financial support so that it can provide latest education and guidance at people's doorstep and latest and advanced technologies can be utilized to improve the teaching system in short time (Raza, Farooq, Ahmad, & Anwar, 2019).

Later on, in 2021, Simon Thabo Mahlaole and Mmakgabo Justice Malebana published a work, in which 301 students were selected from a university of technology in South Africa. This research was conducted to analyze and evaluate the effects of gender (male, female, etc.) on EI (entrepreneurial intentions) and its determinants on students of first, second- and third-year students. The theory of planned behavior (TPB) was used to conduct this research. The main aims and objectives consist of the basic idea that how much the gender has influence over the student's entrepreneurial intentions as well as their determinants and factors. After the data collection and analysis, the results showed that the gender has no specific or very significant impact on the student's entrepreneurial intentions and there is no link between EI attitude, perceived behavior control and subjective norms. Although the study showed that the theory of planned behavior has a very significant statistical correlation with entrepreneurial intentions and it can be helpful as a tool for analyzing students EI. (Mahlaole, 2021).

These studies have showed that TPB is an important theory if the decision making of individuals is concerned.

Theory of Planned Behavior

The theory of planned behavior was first time published in 1991 by Ajzen as “The Theory of Planned Behavior. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes” (50, 179–211). But this theory is not in a very explanatory method but it is given in very elaborative form in Ajzen’s another book, published in 2005. (Ajzen, I. (2005). Attitudes, Personality, and Behavior (2nd Ed.). New York: Open University Press.) This book provides information on the theory of planned behavior as well as a thorough development of the theory and all of its constituent parts.

In the theory of planned behavior, we assume that humans behave and act reasonably and rationally, according to the specific attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavior control. Individuals do not consider all these points while making their decisions regarding any issue or opportunity but all these concepts and factors lies in the back of our mind, in our subconscious and provide a support or base to our decisions on the backstage. It can be said that people may think that their attitude doesn’t have an effect on them but actually it influences the thought process and decision making at some point. In the same way the societal influence and preferences also affects the decision. It may seem like it is a just momenta decision but it has many pillars on which the foundation is laid. This researcher aims to reveal what factors influence the students of English department who completed their BS or MA degrees while choosing their next plan whether they have to pursue their MPhil in English literature or linguistics or to start their professional career. In the field of social science, intention is very important since it is a key factor in determining whether or not a person will choose to engage in a specific behavior. It stands for a component of motivation that influences behavior and is an indication of one's willingness to take a specific activity or put in the required effort to complete it.

Attitude

The attitude can be defined as the degree of liking or disliking which an individual has towards a particular behavior or want. It is classified as an inbuilt or internal characteristic of a humans (Ajzen, Perceived Behavioral Control, Self-Efficacy, Locus of Control, and the Theory of Planned Behavior, 2006).

A study conducted by James M. Curran in 2006 has shown that students’ perceptions of a particular field is a major cause in subject selection. It demonstrates that that students who have a bad attitude about a certain subject, are reluctant to choose that subject, on the other hand students have a positive attitude towards a subject of their own choice. According to this study, attitude plays a critical role in the decision-making process because it directs people to choose the given course on a regular basis. Prior studies have indicated the influence of an optimistic outlook on the choice of courses, such as accounting, language, and entrepreneurship. Analysis of these studies has shown a strong relationship between the creation of Behavioral intention and attitude towards particular subjects.

Subjective norm

Subjective norm, a crucial element of external motivation, acts as a stimulant to drive people to take meaningful actions. Additionally, it encompasses the notion of perceiving societal expectations and pressures exerted by specific figures such as parents, friends, or communities, which either endorse or discourage a desired behavior (Icek Ajzen F. , 1980.). Within the confines of this study, subjective norm encapsulates the belief that one's choices and actions are influenced

by external entities, such as family, employers, friends, and community, thereby fostering motivation and prompting decision-making. In essence, subjective norm holds the power to dictate an individual's course of action. Previous research findings substantiate the significance of subjective norm as a pivotal factor in the decision-making process when selecting a college or university program. Notably, social factors, namely family and peers, emerge as the primary influencers in the course selection process (Kusumawati, 2013).

2.1.3 Perceived behavioral control

Perceived behavioral control refers to an individual's perception of having control over their actions. This perception is often determined by the ease or difficulty of performing the behavior. It is an internal motivator that affects a person's intentions and actions, allowing them to establish goals for their behavior. In the context of this study, individuals with high expectations for their behavior are more likely to pursue a course of action, even when faced with challenges such as lack of interest, information, confidence, or limited resources.

Research Methodology

As this research deals with the exploration and discussion of various factors or motives behind the persuasion of MPhil degree by graduated students instead of starting a full-time professional career or other options, for this purpose a comprehensive methodology is required which can evaluate and analyze all the influences for example, friends, family or the societal pressure and finance and can also discuss the points for improvement in the educational system. So, a broad and comprehensive methodology with a mixture of various methods is required.

Research design:

To support the study the theory of planned behavior will be used. This theory deals with the situation how students or participants' choice is being affected by the family, friends, society, for further in-depth study some other factors like financial situations and syllabus and teaching methods will also be explored to reach at a comprehensive conclusion of how and under what circumstances and pressures a student makes his decision.

A questionnaire will be designed on Google survey forms so that it can be distributed easily to students from different universities and data can be collected easily and in accurate way. This questionnaire is designed according to the main elements of TPB and research questions after that this questionnaire will be circulated among MPhil students from various universities across the Pakistan and then the collected data will be analyzed to find the answers of research questions.

This is a mix method approach as both qualitative and quantitative analysis will be done during the analysis. Most of the questions are MCQs and their data will be collected and analyzed using SPSS descriptive analysis and necessary graph and tables will be made.

Data

The data will be collected from 150 MPhil students, including both males and females, of age from 21 years to onward from different universities and then it will be analyzed. This data is enough to draw conclusions regarding our research questions and objectives. This data will be collected online and will be use to draw graphs and to run different descriptive test and functions.

Research tool

The main tools used in this research will be Google Survey forms to collect data online from students of different areas. A questionnaire consisting of 38 MCQs and some short questions is designed to collect data from the students. The questionnaire is basically divided into four parts:

- Section 1 deals with the demographics in which age, university academic background and related questions have been addressed and it consists of 7 MCQs and 3 short questions
- Second part includes the **Attitude** (apart of the selected theory for this research) and it consists of 9 MCQs
- The third part **Subjective Norms** has 8 MCQs
- The fourth section is basically about the **perceived behavior control** and it consist of 14 MCQs and 3 short questions.

The questionnaire is designed keeping in mind the modern trends and the assumed difficulties and trends in today’s world by the students of different universities across Pakistan. It has both quantitative and qualitative questions. SPSS software will also be used to analyze the quantitative part of the data. Descriptive statistics and correlations will be analyzed using this software.

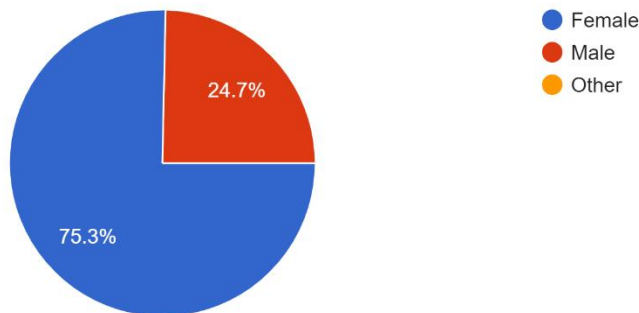
4. Data analysis:

In data analysis the collected data will be analyzed and the trends will be evaluated. So, in the collected data of 150 participants it is noticed that 24.7% are males and 75.3% are females, means that number of female students in MPhil English.

Figure 4.1

Gender Ratio of the Participants

Demographics Gender:
150 responses



Among 150 students, 74% of the students are less than 25 years old, 18% are between 26-30 years and 11% are above 30 years it shows that most of the students are less than 25-year-old, it means that they have started their MPhil degree just after completing their BS/MA. As far as their previous academic background is concerned, 68% of the students have completed their BS/MA degree in combined form studying both literature and linguistics, 21.3% have studied literature and 10.6% in linguistics.

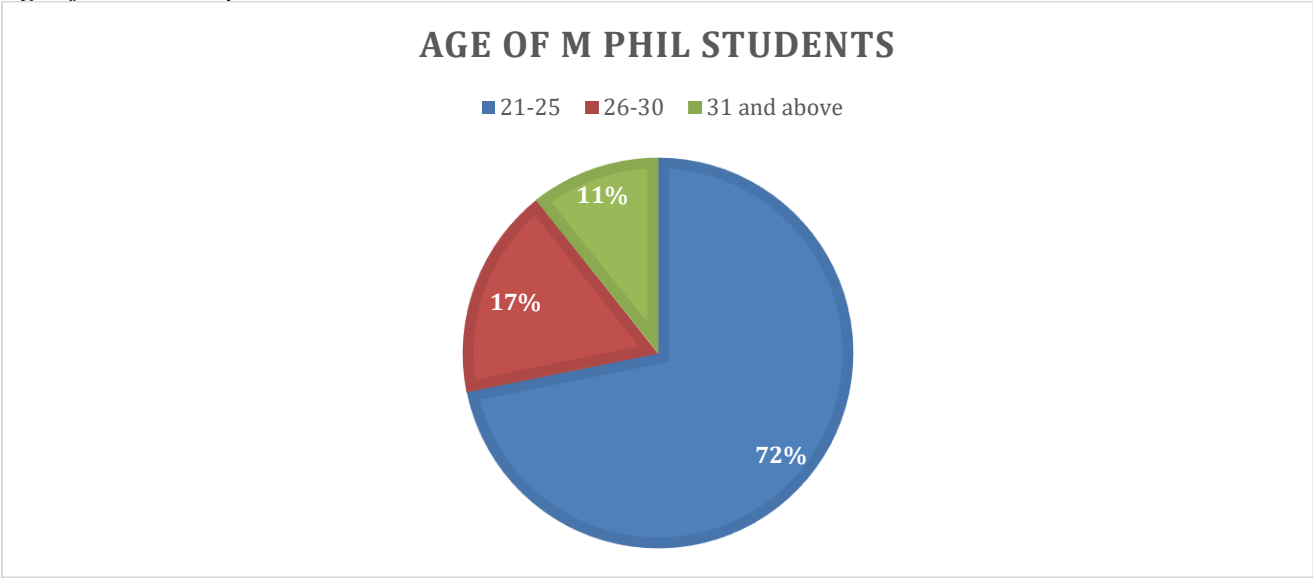
Table 4.1

Distribution of Students by Age Group

Age of the Students	Percentage of the Students
21-25	74%
26-30	18%
31 and above	11%

The pie chart of the age of MPhil students is given in chart 4.1

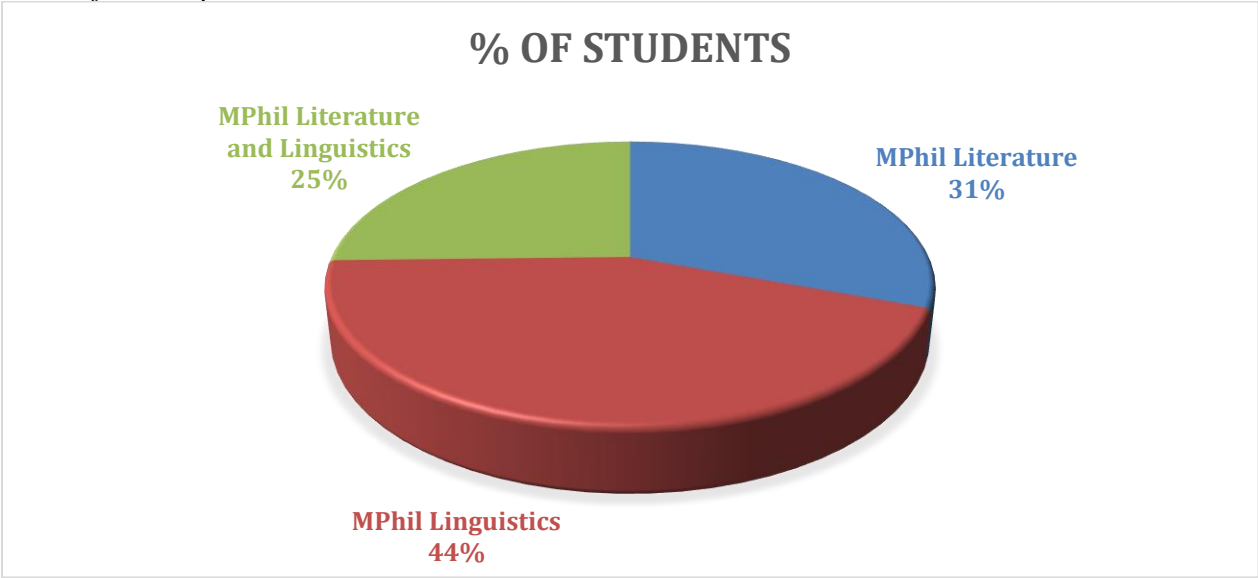
Chart 4.1
Age of the Participants



Trend of literature and linguistics:

In MPhil, again there are three main categories; 44% of the students are pursuing their MPhil degree in linguistics, which shows the demand and interest of linguistics in modern era (as described by the students in the short statements collected through survey, and also given in appendix), and 30.7% in literature and around 25.4% have taken admission in MPhil English Literature and Linguistics. Some responses are also collected from the students about why they selected Literature or Linguistics and why they have preferred one over the other. The results showed that students think that linguistic is a more advanced and scientific field and can be investigated in many new ways and it has a broader scope than literature. On the other hand, students have also selected Literature and their primary point was to increase knowledge and more life related material. The responses are given in the Students Responses 4.2.1.2, a chart representing the percentage of students in different classes of MPhil in Chart 4.2.

Chart 4.2
Class of Participants



Note: There are three types of MPhil English; MPhil Literature, Linguistics or Combined

Now the researcher will analyze the answers received by the students to analyze the reasons why they selected MPhil studies. By keeping in mind TPB, the influence of family, friends and society can be discussed.

4.1 Decision Making:

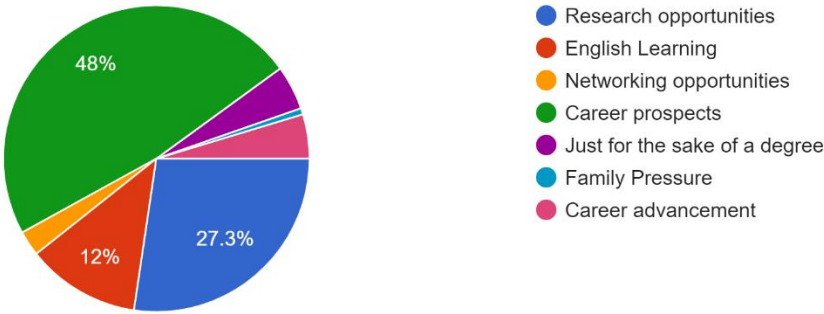
According to the theory of planned behavior the decision making of an individual are basically divided in three main categories:

1. Attitude,
2. Subjective Norms (family, friends and society)
3. Perceived Behavioral Control

So, the researcher will analyze these aspects from the questionnaire and try to answer the research questions. The first point is attitude which depends upon the personal choice and preferences. According to the collected data most of the MPhil students are doing this degree for career opportunities and they think that they can avail better job opportunities after MPhil. As 48% of the students of MPhil think that this degree is going to help them in getting better jibs as their skills are being polished in this degree.

Figure 4.2
Motivation of the Participants to Start MPhil Degree

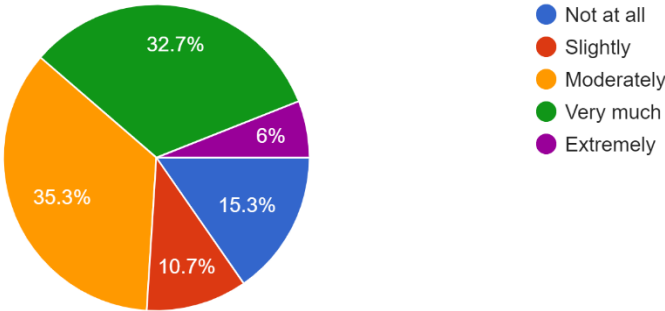
3. What aspect of an MPhil program in English motivated you to start this degree?
150 responses



From the data the researcher can see that the opinion of people near a person affects a large extent. Around 35.3% of the students think they have been moderately affected by the surroundings opinion but 32.7% of the students.

Figure 4.3
Influence of Family and Friends on the Participants

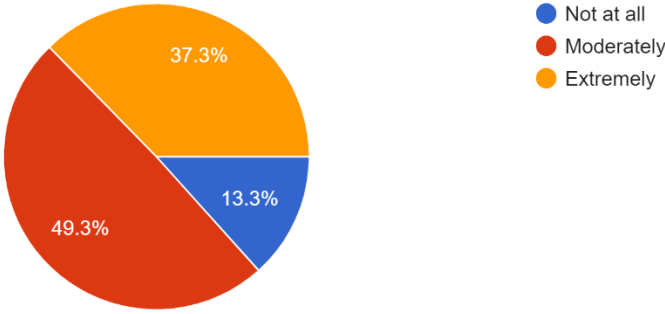
1. To what extent did the opinion of your family and friends influence your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?
150 responses



This shows that family plays an important role in the decision of pursuing MPhil as about 1/4 of the students think they have taken this decision on your own without family influence.

Figure 4.4
Influence of Teachers on the Participants

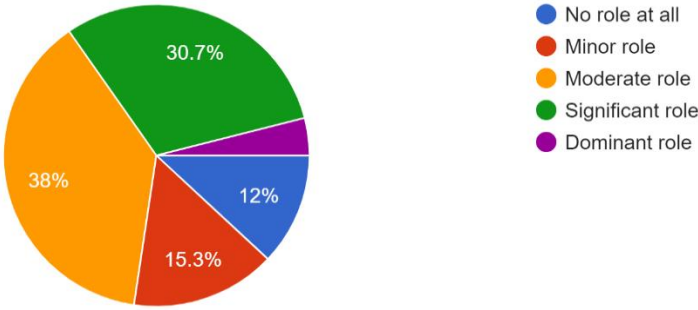
2. How supportive and influential were your teachers in your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?
150 responses



As far as the roles of teachers is considered, about half (49.3%) of the students responded that it moderately affected their decision making about MPhil degree and 37% students agreed that their teachers influence matters in their decision as they have been very supportive and influential. More than 32% of the students confirmed the impact of their friends on their decision by selecting the “significant role” and “dominant role” in the options. Only 12% of the students said that their decision was not influenced by their friends.

Figure 4.5
Influence of Peers on the Participants

3. What role did the expectations of your peers play in your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?
150 responses

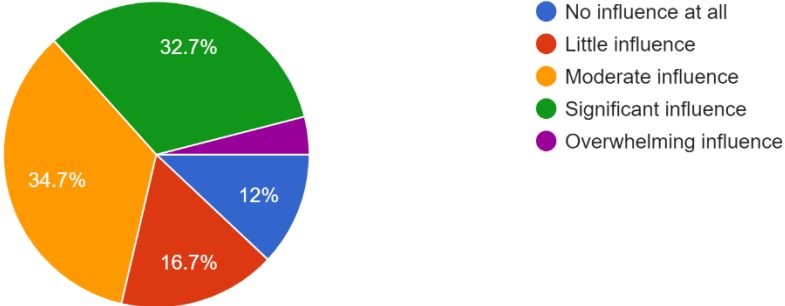


The study shows that the effect of friends on a student’s decision making is not negligible. Overall societal expectations have influenced the decision making of a large number of students. 32.7% of the students were strongly influenced by societal expectations.

Figure 4.6
Influence of Societal Expectations on the Participants

4. In your opinion, how much influence did societal expectations have on your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?

150 responses

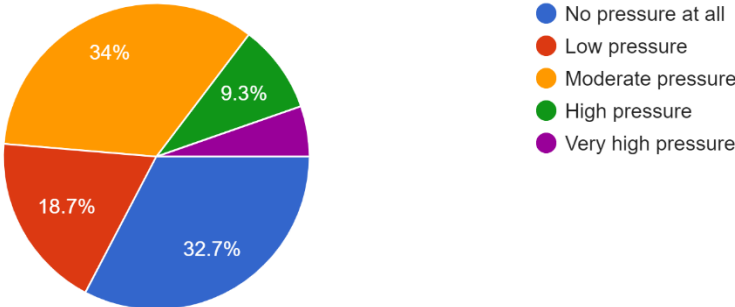


From the students’ responses it can be concluded that only 14.6 % of the students were forced strictly by their family or parents to pursue MPhil degree. Most of the students accepted that there was a family pressure but it was of moderate intensity. Only 32% of the students declared that there was no family pressure on them to pursue this MPhil degree and they are doing it by their own choice.

Figure 4.7
Influence of External Factor on the Participants

6. To what extent do you feel pressured by external factors (family, friends, societal expectations) in your decision-making process?

150 responses



Most of the students who are currently pursuing their degrees are not doing any job that means they are relying on their family for their financial expenditures. In the collected data, we see that 51.3% of the MPhil students are dependent on their family.

4.1.1 Job perspective:

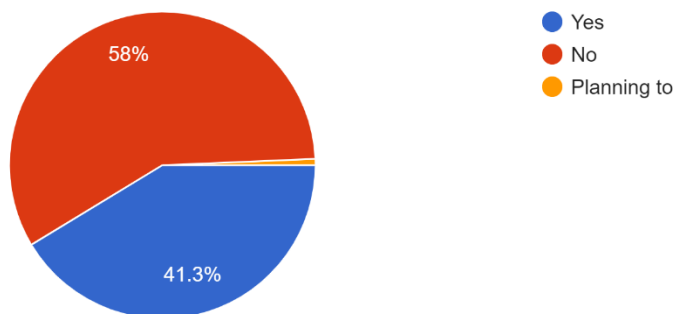
From the collected data it is counted that after completing their BS/MA degrees, 58% of the students are not doing part time jobs, 0.7% are planning or trying to get a job and the rest of 41.3% are currently doing a job along with their MPhil degree.

Figure 4.8

Percentage of the Participants Doing Any Part Time Job

Are you currently doing any part time job along with your MPhil degree?

150 responses



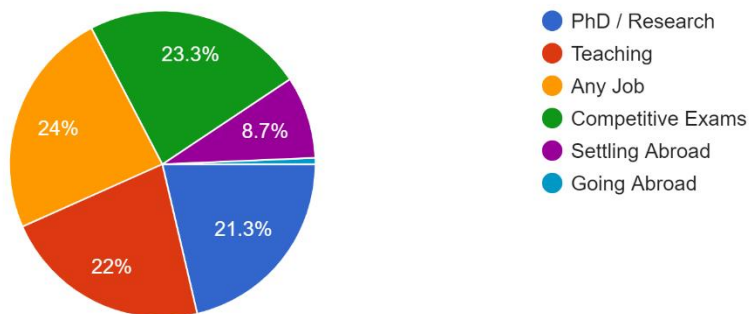
Most of the students didn't start any job after BS/MA degree and almost same number of students are doing part time jobs, those who have started job after BS/MA degree. Students have many different plans after completion of their MPhil degree but most of them will be looking for any job to get themselves settled. The second preference is to go for competitive exams.

Figure 4.9

First Preference after MPhil

What will be your first preference after completing your MPhil?

150 responses



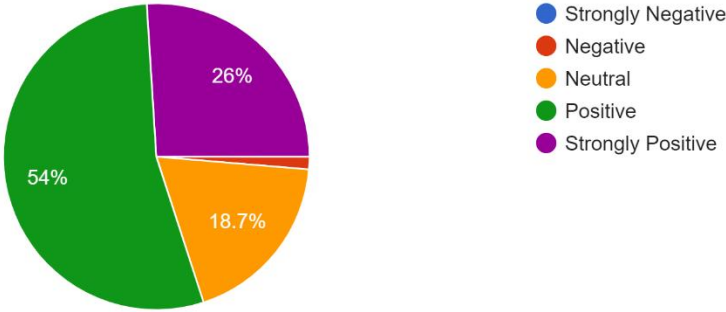
4.1.2 Usefulness of MPhil:

It is noticeable that not all the students who are pursuing their MPhil, don't consider this idea of pursuing degree as very much beneficial. Most of them are doing as they think it's important

for various purposes. 54% of the students have said that they are positive about their admission in an MPhil degree and they think it was a good decision.

Figure 4.10
Perception of the Idea of Pursuing MPhil Degree

1. How do you generally perceive the idea of pursuing an M Phil degree in English?
150 responses



It can also be seen that 13.3% of the students believe completely that this degree is going to be their professional foundation and 47.3% of the students think that their degree can be very useful for them but the rest of students are not sure 34% said it will have a moderate effect, maybe because they wanted to carry another job on which the degree is slightly useful and there are some students who firmly believe that this degree is of no use for them.

Figure 4.11
Alignment between MPhil and Career

5. To what extent do you believe an MPhil degree aligns with your long-term career aspirations?
150 responses

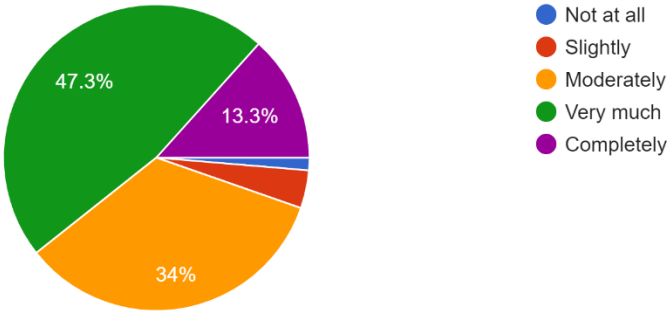
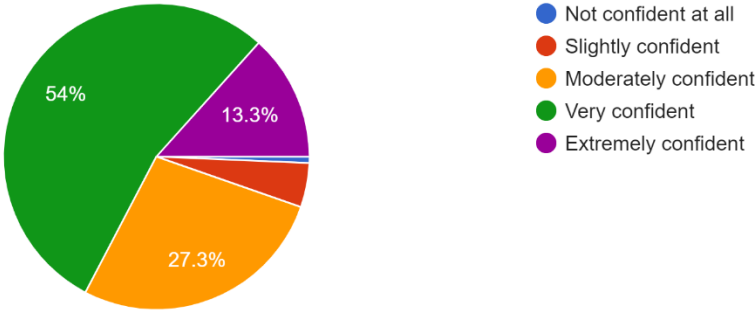


Figure 4.12
Influence of MPhil on Personality Grooming of the Participants

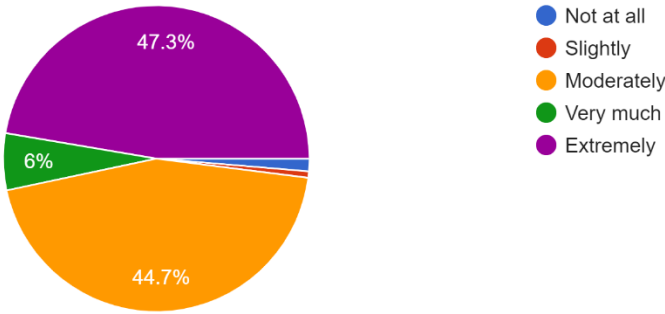
6. How confident are you that this M Phil program is helpful in your personality grooming?
150 responses



Data indicates that 54% of the students (from respondents think that MPhil degree help a lot in their personality grooming. Only a very few students think that it is not helping but mostly think it is very helpful in personality grooming of students.

Figure 4.13
MPhil usefulness in Professional Career

To what extent do you think this M Phil degree is going to be beneficial in your professional career?
150 responses

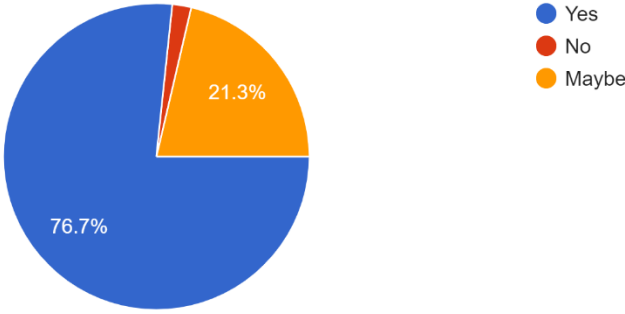


4.1.3 View of your decision:

The first question was how they made their decision to pursue MPhil degree but after taking admission in MPhil the question is are they currently satisfied with their degree. And 76.7% of the students said that they are satisfied with the decision. It is observable that

Figure 4.14
Perception of the Decision about Pursuing MPhil

8. Do you think it was a good decision to pursue an MPhil program?
150 responses



76.7% of the students think that it was a good decision that they decided to get admission in Phil degree. 21.3% are uncertain, it shows that they are confused but very few are those who are regretting their decision.

Keeping in view all the above points and this question response it can be seen that most of the students think that their decision of pursuing MPhil was a good decision as it is being helpful for them in many ways.

Figure 4.15
Motivation for MPhil of the Participants

What aspect of an MPhil program in English motivated you to start this degree?
150 responses

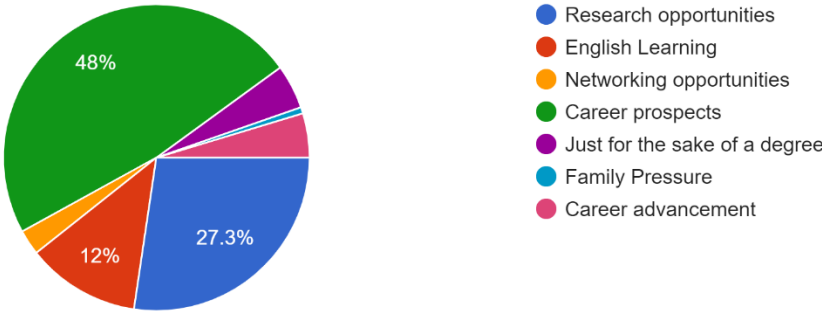


Table 2
Pursuing an MPhil degree instead of A Professional Career

Options	N	%
Strongly Disagree	2	1.3%
Disagree	9	6.0%
Neutral	53	35.3%
Agree	75	50.0%
Strongly Agree	11	7.3%

The data in the Table 4.2 elaborates the percentage of students view regarding MPhil degree instead of a full-time professional career.

4.1.4 Suggestions:

In the questionnaire some questions the value of MPhil in their view was asked to understand how they perceive this degree and the percentage can be seen in Figure 4.16.

Figure 4.16

Value of MPhil in Current Education System

Count of 2. What is the value of M Phil degree in current education system of Pakistan?

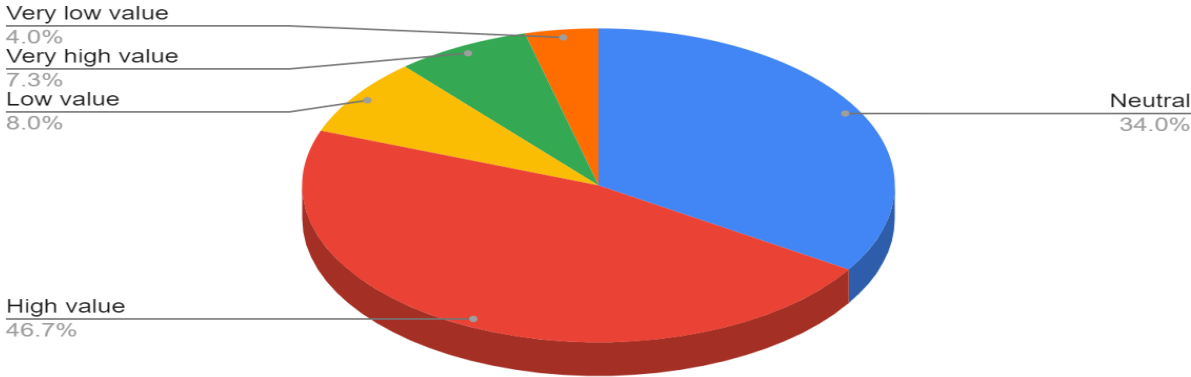
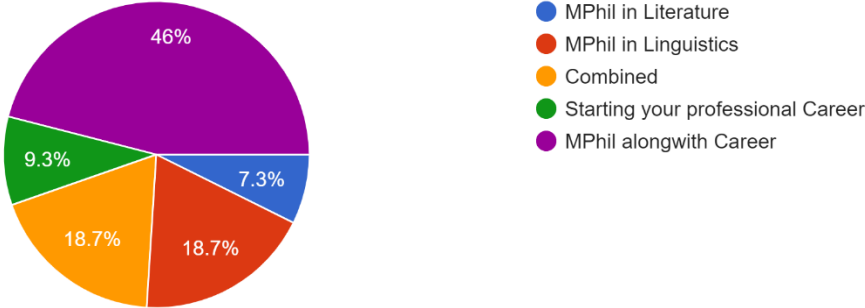


Figure 4.17
Suitable Options for Fresh Graduates

9. Keeping in view the current trends, which of the following is more suitable for freshly graduate students?

150 responses



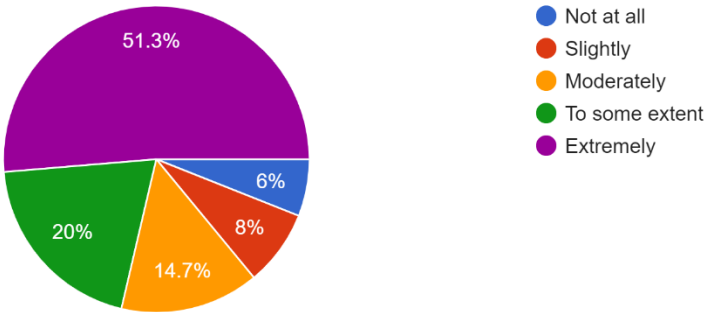
When the students of MPhil were asked about what the freshly graduate students should do, 46% of them responded with the option that they should start a career along with their MPhil.

4.1.5 Financial Aspects

Most of the students can't afford all the expenses by themselves and they need and they are dependent on their families. 51.3% of the student confirmed that they need family support for finance.

Figure 4.18
Dependency on Family for Finance

7. To what extent does the financial support by family is important for you to continue your degree?
150 responses



Around 56% of the students of MPhil support the idea that student of MPhil should do something for his/her career.

4.1.6 Descriptive Statistics

Now descriptive statistics will be applied on the questions to check the means and standard deviation using the SPSS software (see Table 3) and then the analysis will be done according to the questions and their means.

Table 4.3

Descriptive Statistics of the Data Obtained from the Respondents

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender:	150	1	2	1.75	.433
Age:	150	1	3	1.33	.609
Academic Background:	150	1	3	2.57	.679
Which academic class are you currently enrolled in?	150	1	3	1.81	.814
Did you start any career (teaching, online work, business, job, etc.) after your BS/MA?	150	1	3	1.47	.587
Are you currently doing any part time job along with your MPhil degree?	150	1	3	1.59	.506
1. How do you generally perceive the idea of pursuing an M Phil degree in English?	150	2	5	4.05	.708
2. What is the value of M Phil degree in current education system of Pakistan?	150	1	5	3.45	.894
4. How do you view your decision about pursuing an MPhil degree instead of / along with a professional career?	150	1	5	3.56	.773
5. To what extent do you believe an MPhil degree aligns with your long-term career aspirations?	150	1	5	3.67	.807
6. How confident are you that this M Phil program is helpful in your personality grooming?	150	1	5	3.75	.770
7. In your opinion, how influential was the reputation of the institution offering the MPhil program in your decision-making process?	150	1	5	3.37	.980
8. Do you think it was a good decision to pursue an MPhil program?	150	1	3	1.45	.824
9. Keeping in view the current trends, which of the following is more suitable for freshly graduate students?	150	1	5	3.68	1.401
1. To what extent did the opinion of your family and friends influence your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?	150	1	5	3.03	1.138



2. How supportive and influential were your teachers in your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?	150	1	5	3.48	1.345
3. What role did the expectations of your peers play in your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?	150	1	5	2.99	1.052
4. In your opinion, how much influence did societal expectations have on your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?	150	1	4	2.96	1.009
5. How influential was the advice of professionals in your field when deciding whether to pursue an MPhil degree?	150	1	5	3.14	1.087
6. To what extent do you feel pressured by external factors (family, friends, and societal expectations) in your decision-making process?	150	1	5	2.36	1.183
7. To what extent does the financial support by family is important for you to continue your degree?	150	1	5	4.03	1.237
8. Can you manage all of your financial expenditures by yourself along with your M Phil degree?	150	1	5	2.50	1.375
1. Do you feel confident in your ability to successfully complete this M Phil program in English?	150	1	5	3.82	1.004
3. How much control do you believe you have over the financial expenses of pursuing an M Phil degree?	150	1	5	2.87	1.079
4. To what extent do you think this M Phil degree is going to be beneficial in your professional career?	150	1	5	3.97	1.036
5. How do you envision your career prospects in five years, if you pursue this M Phil degree?	150	1	5	3.85	.721
6. How do you envision your career prospects in five years, if you had entered the workforce directly (without an M Phil degree)?	150	1	5	3.17	.721
7. To what extent, do you believe that the knowledge and skills gained in your M Phil studies will contribute to your career advancement?	150	1	4	3.59	.604



9. To what extent your previous degree (BS/MA) studies are helpful in your current M Phil studies and future prospects?	150	1	4	3.33	.719
10. Are you satisfied with the curriculum of your M Phil degree?	150	1	4	1.78	.759
11. Do you perceive any potential conflicts between your M Phil studies and your career/business plans?	150	1	3	2.18	.778
12. Does society value an M Phil degree instead of starting a full-time professional career?	150	1	5	2.33	.946
13. To what extent, your M Phil studies contribute to your overall academic journey and future aspirations?	150	1	5	3.59	1.030
14. To what extent do you think M Phil degree encourages students to embrace change and innovation in their academic pursuits?	150	1	5	3.49	.784
Valid N (list wise)	150				

The collected data from the respondents provides information about the perceptions and decisions of 150 students currently pursuing an MPhil degree in English, covering various aspects related to their admission in MPhil, external influences and education policies.

The mean of the data shows that the students generally perceive the idea of pursuing an MPhil degree positively, with a mean score of 4.05 out of 5. In the Pakistan the value of an MPhil degree in is rated at 3.45 (according to the responses). The mean score of 3.56 indicates that students are confident in their choice to pursue an MPhil degree. In addition, they hold the belief that obtaining an MPhil degree is in line with their future job goals (mean score of 3.67) and contributes to their personal development (mean score of 3.75).

Upon examining the average financial considerations of students, it is evident that financial assistance from family holds great significance to students, with a mean score of 4.03. Their ability to independently handle financial expenses and pursue the MPhil degree is moderately confident, with an average score of 2.50.

Students have a high level of assurance in their ability to successfully finish the MPhil program, with an average score of 3.82. Additionally, they consider the degree as advantageous for their professional career, with an average score of 3.97. They anticipate favorable job opportunities in five years with an MPhil degree (average score of 3.85). The curriculum satisfaction, on the other hand, is rated more modestly, with an average score of 1.78.

Upon analysis, it is evident that students have recognized the problems and potential conflicts that arise between MPhil study and career/business ambitions, as indicated by a mean score of 2.18. The societal worth of an MPhil degree compared to commencing a full-time professional employment is considered considerably inferior, with an average rating of 2.33. Students perceive that their MPhil degrees make a substantial contribution to their academic

trajectory and future ambitions (mean score of 3.59). The degree is also perceived as fostering a mindset that promotes acceptance of change and creativity in students' academic endeavors, as indicated by an average score of 3.49.

In short by employing the SPSS software for descriptive analysis, the research has yielded mean values that emphasize favorable reviews of MPhil studies, the impact of external factors on decision-making, expenses, and the perceived benefits of the MPhil degree on students' academic and professional development.

This analysis also recognizes the problems and conflicts, outlining potential areas for development in the MPhil program and its connection with students' career objectives. The research indicates a predominantly favorable perspective of pursuing an MPhil degree, with acknowledgment of the significance of influential elements such as parents, educators, and professionals. The program's advantages and prospects for the future have been recognized while there are reservations regarding financial factors and possible interference with career ambitions. In summary, the study offers valuable insights into the complex decision-making process involved with pursuing MPhil education in English.

4.1.7 Correlations:

The correlation of some important questions will also be analyzed using SPSS software to see how much they are linked and dependent upon each other.

Table 4.4
Analysis of Correlation Coefficient between Decision Making and Usefulness

Correlations				
			Do you think it was a good decision to pursue an MPhil program?	To what extent your previous degree (BS/MA) studies are helpful in your current MPhil studies and future prospects?
Spearman's rho	8. Do you think it was a good decision to pursue an MPhil program?	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.159
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.053
		N	150	150
	9. To what extent your previous degree (BS/MA) studies are helpful in your current MPhil studies and future prospects?	Correlation Coefficient	-.159	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.053	.
		N	150	150

If the correlation coefficient between these two questions the perception of pursuing MPhil as a good decision (variable 1) and the perception of previous degree's helpfulness in current MPhil studies and future prospects (variable 1) is -0.159. The negative correlation coefficient

suggests an inverse relationship between the two variables. As the perception of the decision being good decreases, the perceived helpfulness of previous degree studies tends to decrease, and vice versa. The p-value (Sig.) is reported as .053, which is slightly above the conventional significance level of 0.05. So, the observed correlation in this test is not statistically significant at the 0.05 level, but still, it is indicating a potential trend. The marginal p-value and the negative correlation suggest a potential trend that students who think it was a good decision to pursue MPhil degree, perceive their previous education very helpful in this regard

By conducting a Spearman's rho test between two survey questions, it can understand that the family pressure is linked with the societal pressure or not. And it influences on the decision to pursue an MPhil program.

Table 4.5

Analysis of Correlation Coefficient between Decision Making and Usefulness

Correlations					
			1. To what extent did the opinion of your family and friends influence your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?	4. In your opinion, how much influence did societal expectations have on your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?	
Spearman's rho	1. To what extent did the opinion of your family and friends influence your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.210*	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.010	
		N	150	150	
		4. In your opinion, how much influence did societal expectations have on your decision to pursue an MPhil degree?	Correlation Coefficient	.210*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.	
		N	150	150	
	Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

The correlation coefficient between the influence of family and friends (Variable 1) and the influence of societal expectations (Variable 2) on the decision to pursue an MPhil is 0.210. The positive correlation coefficient in this comparison suggests a positive relationship between these two statements. It shows that the influence of society also affects family pressure. As the influence of family and friends increases, there is a tendency for the influence of societal expectations to also increase. The p-value (Sig.) is .010. This indicates that the observed correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, and it suggests a meaningful relation between these statements.

The positive and statistically significant correlation shows that students who face a family pressure also face a societal burden and expectations to pursue an MPhil. This indicates a potential interconnectedness between these two sources of influence, highlighting the multifaceted nature of decision-making processes regarding academic pursuits.

4.2 Educational policy:

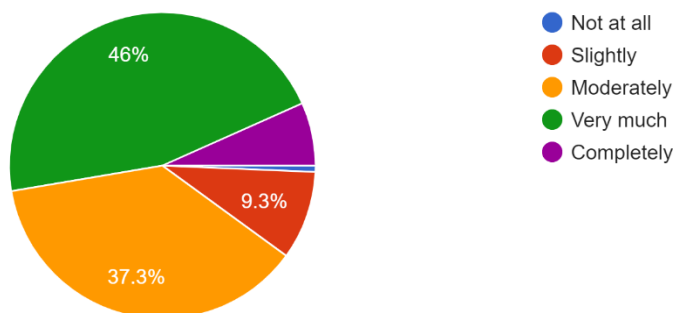
Education policy and curriculum by HEC is an important factor which leads to the development of various skills in the students. MPhil degree encourages students to embrace change and innovation in their academic pursuits and only 6.7% of the students completely agree with this statement 46%

Figure 4.19

Encouragement to Embrace Change and Innovation

To what extent do you think M Phil degree encourages students to embrace change and innovation in their academic pursuits?

150 responses



The opinions of students regarding educational policies, teaching methodologies, curriculum and the problems they faced during their BS/MA and current education are collected and the researcher will analyze and summarize them for suggestions and implications.

5. Findings/Results:

By the analysis of the data received from the respondents the researcher has find the answers for the research questions and the hypothesis have been proven to a large extent.

5.1 Decision making:

It has been found that many factors contributed to the decision making of graduated students to take admission in MPhil degree. Students who want to continue their journey to PhD and go for teaching job are more intended to pursue MPhil degree. Some are doing it because of the pressure of the surrounding. Family, friends, teachers, society has a lot of effect on the decision making of the students and by analyzing the data it has been observed that most of the students have chosen the moderately option the positive response, so the majority of the students go with the opinion that these factors affect the individuals/students very much. But in addition to this, there are many other factors which also have a significant impact on student's decision making and in building pressure for example, financial situations, expenditures, career prospects or job opportunities suggest that

Table 5.1

Arranged data of TPB application used in analysis

Options	Attitude %	Family %	Friends %	Society %	Teachers%	Value of MPhil%
Strongly Disagree	0	15.3	12	12	13.3	4.0
Disagree	1.3	10.7	15.3	16.5		8.0
Neutral	18.7	35.3	38	34.7	39.3	34.0
Agree	54	32.7	30.7	32.7		46.7
Strongly Agree	26	6	4	6	37.3	7.3

Note: The percentages represent the influence of various factors on the decision to pursue an MPhil degree, as reported by the respondents.

These influences affect the student's decision and they change their decision according to the situations. So, some students pursue the MPhil degree but they don't want to that's why some of them goes for paid assignments and don't do their own work which is a big barrier in achieving the purpose and soul of the degree of MPhil.

By collecting the data from the analysis and arranging them in a tabular form is given in the table given below. In this table the trends are easily comparable and it can be seen that majority of the students are not with any opinion and have selected moderately or neutral option, which indicates confusion or they think that system is working at average.

Table 5.2

Summary of the MCQs Related to Studies

Questions	Previous degree value %	Pursuing of MPhil %	Usefulness of MPhil %	Personality grooming %	Financial dependency%
Strongly Disagree	1.3	1.3	0.7		8
Disagree	10.7	6.0	1.3	1.3	6
Neutral	42	35.3	44.7	27.3	14.7
Agree	46	50.0	6	54	20
Strongly Agree		7.3	47.3	13.3	51.3

5.2 Financial dynamics:

From the analysis it is interpreted that most of the students are financially dependent on their parents although some are doing part time job but it is not enough for their expenditures and they need money. 51.3% of the students are totally dependent on their families for their finance and only 8% are bearing their own expenses. So, most of the students are also worried about their need money. Students think that they should do some work along with MPhil degree.

6. Discussion:

The analysis and findings have provided clearly the main points and values of the percentage of student's opinions about different questions asked to them regarding their decision making, satisfaction with their current MPhil degree, financial difficulties they are facing currently, their dependency on their family, educational difficulties bad suggestions regarding the

policies. And it is evident that student's decision is very much influenced by the social and family pressure, but some are also doing it by solely their own choice. Although a large number of students mentioned that both factors, their own will and pressure motivated them to do so.

In a study conducted by James M. Curran (2006), it has been observed that students' choices of a given subject are very much dependent on their perceptions of that particular field. This suggested that if a student is attracted towards a specific topic and interested in that subject he will go for studies in that subject and the students who have a bad attitude about any particular subject, they don't select it, the same thing we observe that some students are not willing to select this degree but they are doing it under some pressure. James' study leads us to the conclusion that attitude plays a critical role in the decision-making process because it directs people to choose for their future but in the current study it has been analyzed and found that attitude is not the only factor and many other factors like finance, societal perception etc. are also very important in this regard.

This current research uses the theory of TPB to study the process of decision-making and to analyze family and societal influence. Kusumawati (2013) also conducted research regarding the selection process of students at a university in Indonesia and it has revealed that the influence of family plays a significant role alongside other essential factors such as financial obligations, institutional reputation, geographical proximity, and career opportunities is very significant in the decision-making process of the students. It was observed that the individuals will select the educational program offered at UiTM Kelantan if they receive encouragement from influential figures in their lives. This particular observation leads to the formulation of the second hypothesis, which states that. "The subjective perception of societal norms has a positive impact on the inclination to choose an educational course at UiTM Kelantan (Kusumawati, 2013)." That's why in this research the theory of TPB has been employed and question paper was designed keeping in view the points of this theory.

After that Edicreia Andrade dos Santos' (2016) research shows that the inspiration and motivation of students to choose an accounting degree or to start a profession in the respected field is very much impacted by their understanding of their own value. Consequently, it is expected that individuals who possess the necessary self-confidence will opt for an educational program offered by UiTM Kelantan with the aim of confronting and overcoming various challenges. An individual's inclination to enroll in a particular course of study at UiTM Kelantan is favorably influenced by their conviction that they can exercise control over their own conduct. In the same way the current research analyzed the tendency of students to pursue MPhil degree but the spectrum is broader than the mentioned research because this current research deals with many other aspects also and analyze the factors in detail.

A very similar study like this research was conducted, in the state of Paraná, to analyze the student's tendency to pursue a career in the field of accounting in which 691 students' intentions who graduated in Parana, from different public universities just like the current research as data has been collected from different universities across Pakistan, both researches are based on the (TPB) theory of planned behavior. Following collection, the data were assessed using methods from structural equation analysis and descriptive statistics. This research also has descriptive statistics but also has some correlation studies and qualitative analysis.

Findings in the mentioned result highlight that variables like subjective norm, attitude, and perceived behavioral control influence students' intention of going into a profession in accounting.

The investigation's hypotheses were verified in most mesoregions. Universities in big and developed cities of Paraná correspond to the six mesoregions whose samples were confirmed. But in the current research cities-based classifications have not been made.

The results of both researches are very different as both of the researches have different agendas. The research in Parana was conducted to clarify the characteristics of accounting graduates from public universities and gave the managers of such institutions to analyses differentiating strategies in connection to course curricula and methods, depending on the location and the regulatory agencies could also apply the results as a starting point for detail studies on the factors influencing the aspirations of aspiring people and establish regulations that direct educational institutions in creating syllabus with relevant and consistent material for the companies or business (Edicreia Andrade dos Santos, 2018). But on the other hand the current research is intended to analyze the decision making and influence of various societal factors on students in this regard. It also analyzed the financial aspects and the lack and change in the educational system of Pakistan. The findings of this research can be used by the educational policy makers to understand the students' need according to the current era.

One of the main reasons noticed in this discussion is this, many students are pursuing MPhil degree just to get a better job. As majority of the students replied that they want to get any job after MPhil category which shows the fear of unemployment in the students, even after securing good degrees, which highlights a back draw in the education system.

Many students face financial issues and also want some change in the educational system and HEC policies. To identify and analyze this idea many researches have been conducted. In 2019, Raza, Mehr Mohsin; Farooq, Muhammad and three other writers conducted research in which they analyzed the education policies of Pakistan and why new policies should be suggested. It was qualitative research, in which data was collected in document analysis form, semi structure interviews and focus groups, but in this research only questionnaire has been used to get the data but the number of students is far more to generalize the answers and increase their validity. They have selected participants from different levels for example from MPhil, PhD and even the lecturers the participants in this research were 5 PhD, 15 MPhil scholars and 5 teachers with PhD degrees in educational field. They all participated in this semi structured interview. The results of this study showed that the higher education institutions, lack of financial aids, incompatible technological instruments and methods etc. are major hindrances in the path of a fast and efficiently growing education system. The suggestions included the empowerment of HEC and to give administrative and financial support so that it can provide latest education and guidance at people's doorstep and latest and advanced technologies can be utilized to improve the teaching system in short time (Raza, Farooq, Ahmad, & Anwar, 2019).

So, from this discussion, it can be inferred that societal influences play a vital role in the decision-making of English graduates. Financial conditions are also important in decision-making, and they impact the performance of the students. English graduates have given many suggestions regarding educational policies and have identified some deficiencies in the education system.

7. Conclusion:

In short, it is obvious that family, friends and the society play a vital role in the decision-making of English graduates. Financial conditions are also important in decision-making, and they impact the performance of the students. English graduates have given many suggestions regarding educational policies and have identified some deficiencies in the education system.

7.1 Decision Making:

This study has discovered that impact of societal and family pressures on the decision-making process of English graduates in Pakistan. It means that there is a need for proper counseling of the students, so that they can select their future according to their abilities and choice. This will lead to more productive environment where they can play better role in the society. Many students are pursuing degrees for jobs even if they are not interested in that particular field and later on instead of being an addition to the productivity, they are not useful for the field because of the lack of interest. Career counseling should be done and parents should understand the situation of the students and understand them in making a better decision for themselves instead of imposing a societal trend.

7.2 Financial Considerations:

Financial dynamics is a critical factor and influence students' decisions regarding their future and life. To improve this system and for a proper growth of the education in Pakistan, educational institutions and Policymakers have to address these financial challenges faced by the researchers to ensure authentic and dedicated researches. Researches are important in understanding a society's problems and to deal with it, if proper researches are being conducted and their solutions are presented then a change, by spreading awareness, can be made in the society.

7.3 Educational System and Policy Reforms:

There is a dire need for reforms in the teaching methodologies, educational policies, and curriculum and, including financial support for higher education institutions. Quality should be the main focus of the research and for this purpose interested students should participate in this work. It can be done by keeping in view all the above-mentioned points and it can ultimately lead to a literary and productive environment. Empowering institutions like the Higher Education Commission (HEC) is a main pillar regarding an efficient and improved education system.

This study has highlighted the importance of analyzing and refining the educational system of higher classes in Pakistan, comprehensively. This study can provide vital guidance for making educational policy adjustments to tackle the identified obstacles and improve the general standard of education and these implications indicate the need of adopting a proper strategy for developing education policies, taking into account social factors, financial considerations, and student input, in order to enhance the education system.

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