

Self-Efficacy and Career Choice Among Undergraduate Students of Ruaha Catholic University in Iringa, Tanzania

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Abstract: The study aimed to assess the relationship between self-efficacy and career choice among undergraduate students of Ruaha Catholic University in Iringa region, Tanzania. The study adopted mixed method approach, specifically convergent parallel research design for data collection. The study consisted of 223 respondents from third year and second year students. Instrument developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995) for self-efficacy was used to collect data. Third year students were given questionnaires while second year data were collected through focus group discussion. The validity of qualitative data (open-ended questions and focus group discussion interviews) was obtained through triangulation, rich or thick description and clarifying researcher biases (reflexivity or bracketing). Quantitative data was analysed using descriptive analysis-correlation analysis by SPSS version 23. Qualitative data was analysed using content analysis by data managing, transcribing data into segments, coding and categorizing into themes and interpreting data, the results were presented into direct quotations and narratives. Findings revealed that students were confident in their personal skills and believed that they were capable in their career choice. The findings also showed that self-efficacy influenced career choice among undergraduate students.

Keywords: Self-efficacy, Career, choice, interest, undergraduate students

I. INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, developed countries focus on outcome-based education. Thus, it is believed that students' individual thoughts and their self-beliefs play a significant role in their learning and academic gains (Deeba, 2021). Students have several self-beliefs which are like self-esteem, ideal-self and self-efficacy and among them, self-efficacy is the key element in enhancing personal judgment of a student regarding his competencies (Dinther, Dochy & Segers, 2011) and is a fundamental concept describing one's basic capacity to achieve (Lent and Brown, 2008). Self-efficacy is the ability of an individual in his or her skills to be effective and efficiently perform tasks one is responsible for (Cantos, Sauna, Ramos, Dimaano, Lingon & Pulhin, 2019). Bandura (2002) defined self-efficacy as one's belief in ability to accomplish a task in particular perspectives.

Self-efficacy in career choice represents the confidence of the individuals in which one can engage in

activities associated with choosing appropriate career path (Crispin and Turda, 2015). Students are expected to have abilities and skills to choose their careers for their future life. Self-efficacy is defined as one's confidence in personal skills as well as the belief that, one can effectively direct personal behaviour to reach the goals self (Brusokas and Malinauskas, 2013). Self-efficacy is a determinant factor for a right decision an individual can take in one's life. It is the expectation and conviction of an individual in relation to how successfully he or she can perform a certain task (Brusokas and Malinauskas, 2014). A self-efficacy belief is the one that I can perform the behaviour or behaviours that produce the outcome. Career self-efficacy plays an important role in studying the career objectives of teenagers and young people and the peculiarities of their career choices (Bandura et al. 2001). Self-efficacy in career decision represents the confidence of the individual in which one can engage in activities associated with choosing appropriate career path (Crisan & Turda, 2015). When students lack sufficient sense of efficacy face challenges in career choice and especially if external factors have greater influence than internal or intrinsic factors.

Career choice is an important process which can affect every aspect of one's life including social, economic and health of an individual's life. However, a number of students take such decisions very easily without considering capabilities, wellbeing, talents and values for future life. Making a decision for a career is a very difficult process and a lot of attention is required to accomplish it (Javed and Tariq, 2015). Leong and Barak (2001) cited by Alam (2016) stated that, nearly all individuals have some behavioural areas where they lack confidence in their abilities. Social Cognitive Career theory (SCCT) by Lent, Herkett and Brown (1994) insisted that, people have to act on their decision of what they can do and on their belief about the likely effects of various actions. Students planning to join universities may lack such confidence during their career choice which can result in making wrong decisions. Recognising the problem, UNESCO (2013) stated that students are always nervous about what they will do with their lives, the kind of adult they will become; hence, the career choice has become a delicate issue that requires caution and serious considerations.

In America, the study by Adedunni and Oyesoji, (2015) showed that 20% to 60% of new students joining institutions of higher learning are usually undecided over their supposed career choices. The relationship between self-efficacy and career choice is an important process that need to be addressed among students. Kazi, Alchlaq (2017) indicated that career choice is one of the biggest dilemma and challenge in any student's life as it involves interplay of many factors which are intricately intertwined. The difficulty in making career choice is due to the advancement of technology which affects the way people think about their occupations. The study by Hellen, Omari and Mong'are, (2017) in Kenya showed that, the procedures for making career choice are multifaceted and exclusive for each individual depending on cognitive features and the social arrangement of the individuals' desires. In Tanzania, the study by Amani (2013) realized that, to pursue the right career, students in universities need to make a wise and careful choice depending on their self-confidence. Therefore the researcher in this study wanted to find out how students' self-efficacy guided the process of career choice among undergraduate students at Ruaha Catholic University (RUCU) in Iringa, Tanzania. The study was guided by the following objectives:

- i) To determine the influence of self-efficacy on career choice among undergraduate students of RUCU in Iringa Region.
- ii) To assess personal interest, parental and peer influence on career choice among undergraduate students of RUCU in Iringa Region.

Social Cognitive Career Theory

This study is informed by Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) which was developed by Lent, Hackett and Brown in 1994. The theory explores how career choices are made and turned into actions. The theory is from Albert Bandura's (1986) social cognitive theory in order to explore how career choice are made and turned into actions. Bandura (1986) revealed that people act on their judgments of what they can do and on their beliefs about the likely effects of various actions. The theory explains three building blocks for career choice, which are self-efficacy beliefs, outcome expectations and personal goals.

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's personal beliefs about his or her capabilities to perform particular behaviour or courses of action. Bandura (1986) anticipated that self-efficacy affects the choices people make, their ways of acting, the effort they spend, their perseverance and elasticity. Judgment about self-efficacy determines how much effort people will expand and how long they will persist in the face of obstacles. A strong sense of self-efficacy allows people to feel free to influence and even create the circumstance of their own lives (Bhagat, 2016). People with high level of self-efficacy attribute success to variables within themselves rather than to change factors and are more likely to pursue their own goals (Bandura et al, 1998) and do better at difficult tasks.

Another construct of SCCT is goal choice or intentions leads to more activity by the individual in the relevant area inspiring the individual to move toward action choice and its execution more energetically through organized planning (Lent, Brown & Hackett, 1994). Personal goals or intentions refer to one's intention to engage in a particular activity or to attain a certain level of performance (Lent et al. 1994). Intention is the aware state of the mind that emerges through the action (Bird, 1988) and is considered as the principal motivator and the guide of the behaviour. Choice content goals refer to the type of activity domain one wishes to pursue. Performance goals, that is, the level or quality of performance towards which one aspires within a given domain (Lent et al. (2003).

An outcome expectation is another important factor influencing career choice in this theory. Outcome expectations refer to beliefs about the consequences of performing a particular behaviour (Lent et al, 1994). Outcome expectation in the context of career choice is viewed as people's belief concerning the way they will satisfy their core values in pursuing a particular career path. Outcome expectations are more influential as the individual expect positive results from the behaviour and this is the reason the individuals are interested in presenting behaviour. These building blocks are like guidelines for undergraduate students in making choices of careers. An undergraduate student needs to know his or her interest, career goal determination or expectations for choosing a particular programme and predict the consequences for future life.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. The influence of self-efficacy on career choice among undergraduate students

This section presents the reviewed empirical studies based on the objectives of the study. Again the researcher presents the identified gaps which gave value the necessity of the current study.

Cantos et al (2019) conducted a study to determine the career decision self-efficacy among students of Hospitality and Tourism management in Philippines. The study found out that, students are much confident with career decision self-efficacy in selection of their goals, planning, problem solving, occupational information and accurate self-appraisal. Furthermore, students who are taking Cruise Line Operations in Culinary Arts have a better career decision self-efficacy and female students have a better career decision self-efficacy as to the planning. Tenaw (2013) conducted a study on relationship between self-efficacy, academic achievement and gender in analytical chemistry at Derbe Markos College of Teacher education. . The findings indicated that students' level of self-efficacy was medium (50.08%) and there was no significant different in either self-efficacy between sexes ($t(98) = 0.161, p > 0.1$) but there was statistically significant difference in achievement between sexes ($t(98) = 0.68, p < 0.1$). Also there was a significant relationship between self-efficacy and achievement ($r = 0.385$, at 0.01 level with 98

degrees of freedom). Therefore it was recommended that students should be trained to enhance their self-efficacy. In Indonesia, the study by Basith et al (2020) on academic self-efficacy as predictor of academic achievement was concluded that it has positive relationship with career choice and a predictor in determining academic achievement. In Kenya, a study by Abdinoor (2020) showed there was significant gender difference on career decision making self-efficacy and career maturity than young men.

In China the study by Zhao et al (2020) on career exploration and career decision self-efficacy the results showed that career exploration was directly related to career decision self-efficacy. The results suggest that individuals who engage in more career exploration activities are likely to have more confidence in their abilities to make career decisions over time. Therefore, there is a need to have a program prepared to help students to have confidence in career choice and higher academic aspirations for their future life. Alam (2016) in India, investigated the relationship between self-efficacy, self-concept and occupational aspirations of adolescent. The study found that self-efficacy and self-concept had large associations with adolescents' occupational aspirations and there were significant gender and residential differences in the relationships between self-efficacy, self-concept and occupational aspiration. Suraya and Yunus (2017) stated that higher levels of self-efficacy affect students while enabling them to enjoy successful completion of tasks on the basis of their self-confidence in their field of work. Bhagat (2016) on self-efficacy of secondary school students India showed that, significant difference exists in the self-confidence of secondary school boys and girls. Girls are found more self-confident than boys.

Deeba et al (2021) conducted a study to investigate mathematics self-efficacy of students who study at 10th grade in Pakistan. The results revealed that the four self-efficacy sources (performance accomplishment, vicarious information, verbal persuasion and emotion arousal) were positively affecting the self-efficacy beliefs of students in mathematics. Boys showed are more influenced by knowledge they get on their successful completion of task. They also enjoyed comparing themselves with other peers. Girls when are verbally encouraged, they feel confident and feel more anxiety compared to boys. Sector was difference and significant as students of public sector schools feel confident over successful completion of task that they can do well in future because they performed it in past while students of private sector schools were more confident on influential effects rest of the sources.

In Ghana, the study by Theresia (2015) on career decision self-efficacy among students found that 31.6% of students got information from their parents, 7.4% from their teachers and 3.6% from counsellors. The study found that school was the major source for career choice because students had poor career decision self-efficacy. Therefore, there is a need to help students raise their level of confidence in order to have positive career decision making self-efficacy

so that they can choose according to their interests. Recently, Winga (2021) conducted a study to find out students sources of career information, assess career aspirations and to determine career decision making self-efficacy. It was found also that the students had poor career decision making self-efficacy. Again, the study by Ogutu, Odera and Maragia (2017) to examine the influence of self-efficacy in career decision making among secondary school students. The results showed that factors within self-efficacy variable contributed significantly in the relationship between self-efficacy and career decision making. Basing on findings was recommended that career decision making should be enhanced in schools using career guidance and counselling strategies. Previously, Crisan and Turda (2015) stated that self-efficacy in career decision making represents the confidence of the individuals which they can engage in activities associated with choosing appropriate career path.

2. *Personal interest, parents and peers influence on career choice among undergraduate students*

Personal interests

Deniz, Ture, Uysal and Akav (2014) conducted a study to assess career interest and preferences on terms of gender and social-economic status. Findings showed that there is significant difference with regard to gender of the individuals in terms of field they study and their interests. The result affirmed that goals and conventional field are less affected by personal interests but are more environmental opportunities or societal influence. Hamayon et al (2018) stated that, the interest will encourage students to discover more on activities that they are interested in. Again, it shows that when the economy is in good condition the career choice made by students will also increase. In Kenya, Nyamwage (2016) study sought to examine the influence of interest on career choice decision among first year university students. Findings showed that prior knowledge of what career entails is important to develop interest in a career. Having prior knowledge prepares an individual to what is about to enter hence decision will be made with awareness. Lack of prior knowledge and skills lead to lack of positive attitudes due to wrong career choice. Mpehongwa (2014) conducted a study on career choice of university students in Tanzania and their implications for Vision 2025. The results show that although there is a marked increase in higher education enrolments, majority of the students opt for career in arts and humanities. It recommends that incentives offered to science students at tertiary education should be extended to secondary education where students make critical career decisions.

Family Influence

Xing and Rojewski (2018) conducted a study to examine family structural variables, that reflected family members' socioeconomic status and family process-oriented variables, especially, parental career-related behaviours. The results showed that family was a primary source of social support, exerts a substantial influence on adolescents' career development and decision-making process. Also the results

revealed that parental general psychological support was statistically significant factor in predicting career decision-making self-efficacy. The study by Fouad et al (2016) and Hamayon et al (2018) showed that family influence is a key-factor in career-related decisions. Family influence was correlated in expected ways with family obligation, work volition, work values, calling and occupation engagement. Parents with higher socioeconomic status families are more likely to provide information and sources for the child's career planning and decision making (Hsieh and Huang, 2014). The study by Saleem et al (2014) insisted that parents' professions, their knowledge and income level on various professional areas, the norms, beliefs, information about modern occupations, spotlight to local and international job market, and the skills parents acquire can affect children of their career selection. Previous study by Polos and Drobot (2010) the result showed that, the child's decision are modelled by family influences because the process begins at early stage of development. Thus, parents who are affectionate, tolerant, simulative and performance-oriented get more involved in the children's vocational development.

In Tanzania, Ngussa and Kilumile (2019) investigated the role of teachers and parents on students' career choice preparedness as perceived by secondary schools' students. Parents and teachers were perceived by students to have played their role well for the desired career choice by providing career choice guidance and students' career choice preparedness. They also recommended that, Parents should continue giving career guidance at home, as the practice yields positive results towards student' career choice preparedness. Previous study by Amani and Mkumbo (2018) indicated that family played a significant role in undergraduate students' choice of careers. The influence was particularly significant in families with a higher level of education beginning at secondary school. The study by Mhenga (2011) found that parents' socioeconomic background influences the career choice of secondary school students, with the implication that parents with a good income were able to enrol their children in high quality schools.

Peer group influence in career choice

Naz, Saeed, Khan, Khan, Sheikh, Khan (2014) conducted a study with the purpose exploring the nature, level and extent of peer and friends influence in career decision making process of individuals. The findings showed that peer and friends have considerable impetus towards career decision and academic choices. Olatunji, Adebayo and Akorede (2018) conducted a study investigating the relationship between peer group influence and occupational choice of students in Sokoto metropolis, Nigeria. The results of the study showed that there

was significant relationship between peer group influence and occupational choice of respondents. Based on the findings was recommended that school counsellors and teachers try and encourage students to seek information on occupational choice rather than parading peer advice and sufficient information should be made available to students. Oguta, Odera and Maragia (2017) conducted a study to examine the influence of peer pressure on students' career decision making among secondary school students in Busia County, Kenya. The findings suggested that peer pressure directly influences students' career decision making such that as peer pressure increases, career decision making among students also increases significantly in the same direction.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study applied mixed research method whereby both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used which minimize shortcomings and allows triangulation (O'Leary, 2011). Specifically the study adopted convergent parallel research design which allows collecting both quantitative and qualitative data concurrently but analysed separately and the results to be merged (Creswell, 2014). The study used 223 participants from RUCU using simple random sampling techniques for third year students and purposive sampling techniques for second year students for focus group discussion. Data were collected using questionnaires and focus group discussion interviews. Validity and reliability of instruments were testes, for validity of the instruments procedures of triangulation, writing with rich or thick, clarifying research biases were used. The collected quantitative data were analysed using descriptive analysis with the help of computer software-SPSS while qualitative data were analysed using content analysis by organizing according to themes. Furthermore, the researcher observed and all regulations for conducting a research were fulfilled.

IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The findings were organized basing on the research objectives.

Self-efficacy among undergraduate students

The study sought to investigate the state of self-efficacy among undergraduate students, that is, how students were confident in their daily activities. Participants were third year and second year students of Ruaha Catholic University (RUCU). Third year were given questionnaire and had to rate their answers in five options; 1) Strongly Disagree, 2) Disagree, 3) Undecided, 4) Agree and 5) Strongly Agree. Second year students participated in focus group discussion. Table 1 summarizes the state of self-efficacy among students.

Table 1 Self-efficacy among undergraduate students

Item	SD		D		U		A		SA	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I can always manage to solve difficulty problems if I try hard enough.	9	5.5	5	3	9	5.5	77	47	64	39
If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to go what I want.	10	6.1	8	4.9	10	6.1	76	46.3	60	36.6
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events	9	5.5	7	4.3	23	14	66	40.2	59	36
It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.	6	3.7	8	4.9	14	8.5	53	32.3	83	50.6
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations	7	4.3	7	4.3	31	18.9	70	42.7	49	29.9
I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	8	4.9	3	1.8	16	9.8	62	37.8	75	45.7
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities	9	5.5	14	8.5	16	9.8	72	43.9	53	32.3
When I am confronted with problems, I can usually find several solutions	3	1.8	7	4.3	20	12.2	70	42.7	64	39
If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution	3	1.8	5	3	13	7.9	61	37.2	82	50
I can usually handle whatever comes my way	4	2.4	7	4.3	14	8.5	76	46.3	63	38.4

Source: Schwarzer and Jerusalem 1995- General Self-Efficacy scale

The study wanted to know whether students can manage to solve difficulty problems if they try hard enough. The finding in Table 1 indicates that about 39% of respondents strongly agreed and 47% agreed that can manage to solve difficult problems when they try hard. Minority of the respondents 5.5% strongly disagreed and 3.0% disagreed with the statement that they cannot manage to solve difficulty problems while 5.5% of respondents remained undecided. The results showed that majority of the students can manage to solve difficult problems using their efforts and only the minority are not able. During focus group discussion on difficulty problems, one participant said;

For me I don't run away from problems and I think everyone at this stage is capable of dealing even with difficulty problems. What is needed when facing problems, one has to continue trying to solve and not run away or to lose hope. It is my time to remain strong that will help me in future because after finishing my studies they might and give me an office to manage. (Participant, focus group discussion, December 3, 2021).

To remain strong during opposition is one of the elements of self-efficacy of an individual. The study wanted to know if students remain focused even when faced with oppositions on their decisions. The findings revealed that most respondents 36.6% strongly agreed and 46.3% of respondents agreed that they remain strong during oppositions. Minority of the respondents 6.1% strongly disagreed and 4.9% disagreed that they cannot remain strong during opposition. Respondents 9.5% remained undecided. The results show that students (strongly agree and agree) remained strong during oppositions. Many of them are confident that are capable to find ways during oppositions. One student during interview confessed that;

My previous friends at my village said I better start a business than joining University studies. Society looks at us as are wasting our time instead of going to do business because of unemployment challenge. But I told them without education how will I run that business? Let me go and study business and will come and start while having

the knowledge of business (Participant, focus group discussion, November 24, 2021).

Furthermore, the study attempted to find out from the students respondents how confident were they in dealing with unexpected events. The findings show that most of the respondents 36% strongly agreed and 40.2% of respondents agreed that they are confident. Minority of the respondents 5.5% strongly disagreed and 4.3% of respondents disagreed with the statement while 14% of respondents remained undecided. The findings of this study show that majority of the students sampled were confident and efficient when faced by the unexpected events. During focus group discussion one student said:

I am confident on my choice and am happy on what I am studying. What I am studying was my choice. I think what I am studying will make me succeed in life. I am doing what I planned long time ago (participant 1, focus group discussion interview, 23.11.2021).

Again the study ought to find out from respondents whether they were able to accomplish their goals. The findings indicated that majority of the respondents 50.6% strongly agreed and 32.3% of the respondents agreed. Minority of the respondents 3.7% strongly disagreed and 4.9% of respondents disagreed while 8.5% of respondent remained undecided. Thus, the majority of the respondents (strongly agree and agree) were able to accomplish their goals and few (strongly disagree and disagree) were not able to stick on their plan and accomplish their desires and goals. When discussing with the focus group interview one respondent commented saying;

It was my plan for a long time to become a teacher. After finishing my advanced level my parents discouraged me to join this program saying is a difficult program but I remained determined and focused on my dream. I am happy now as they have accepted my choice (Participant, focus group discussion, November 23, 2021).

Moreover, participants were asked whether they were creative in handling unforeseen situations. The findings revealed that most of the respondents 29.9% strongly agreed

and 42.7% of respondents agreed that they were creative in handling unforeseen situations. Minority of the respondents 4.3% strongly disagreed and also 4.3% of the respondents disagreed with the statement while 18.9% of the respondents failed to decide. The findings revealed that students are capable in handling the unforeseen situations in their lives.

The same idea was stated in previous study by Bhagat (2016) who said that people with strong sense of self-efficacy can influence, select and construct the circumstances of their own life and feel less fearful. Furthermore, in connection with the findings of Cantos et al (2019) stated that, students' attitude can enhance their abilities to handle problems and issues that may arise in a workplace and make positive decision making and conduct good problem-solving skills.

Again, the study wanted to know whether respondents were able to solve most of problems if they invest the necessary efforts. The findings revealed that most of the respondents 45.7% strongly agreed and 37.8% of respondents agreed that are able to solve most of the problems if they invest the necessary efforts. Minority of the respondents 4.9% strongly disagreed and 1.8% of the respondents disagreed while 9.8% of the respondents undecided. The results of this study showed that students are capable of solving problems only if they invest the necessary effort to combat those issues. One student during focus group discussion stated that;

I am capable to solving many problems come my way. I am sure that everyone here has solved many problems up to now. We students face different problems like problems related with money, with units and many other problems. We have to start solving our own problems before we are given leadership to solve society problems once employed (participant, focus group discussion, December 7, 2021).

Another aspect the study wanted to know whether respondents can remain calm when facing difficulties due to coping abilities. The findings showed that most of the respondents 32.3% strongly agreed and 43.9% of respondents agreed that can remain calm when facing difficulties due to coping abilities. Minority of the respondents 5.5% strongly disagreed and 8.5% of the respondents disagreed with the statement, while 9.8% of respondents remained undecided. The result of this study show that majority of the respondents (strongly agree and agree) can remain calm when facing difficulties due to coping abilities they have. During focus group discussion one respondent said;

When I started to attend this course was too difficult for me to follow what we were taught in class. I thank God that I remained calm without complaining or even planning to change the program. Now am comfortable with the program and I am sure will succeed and fulfil my desire (Participant, focus group discussion, November 23, 2021).

Bandura (1997) in trying to explain self-efficacy said he that it influences the efficiency and effectiveness of problem solving and decision making. The study wanted to gain an understanding if students can find solutions when confronted with problems. The findings indicate that most of the respondents 39% strongly agreed and 42.7% of the respondents agreed that they are able to find solutions when confronted with problems. Minority of the respondents 1.8% strongly disagreed and 4.3% of respondents disagreed while 7.9% of the respondents remained undecided. The findings show that students can find solutions when confronted with problem as their self-efficacy influences their efficiency and effectiveness in problem solving. Responding to whether students can find solutions when confronted with problems, one respondent during focus group discussion had this to say;

Problems are always there and everyone has to face them. I remember my plan was to study medicine and I was sure that will I pass my form six examination very well. But the results came not according to my expectation. I was frustrated by the results but by the help of my parents I settled down and then chose to study education with science which had not planned before (respondent, focus group discussion, December 3, 2021).

Again, the study wanted to determine whether they thought getting solutions when were in trouble. The findings of the study indicated that most of the respondents 50% strongly agreed and 37.2% of the respondents agreed that they think of getting solutions when are caught in troubles. Minority of the respondents 1.8% strongly disagreed and 3% of the respondents disagreed while 7.9% of the respondents remained undecided. The findings revealed that students agreed (strongly agree and those of agree) that they can think about solutions when are in trouble. Even during focus group discussion one respondent said; I normally find solutions whenever faced with challenges or problems before asking any help from my friends. You know at this level I need to learn how to solve any problem coming my way (participant, focus group discussion, November 23, 2021).

People with strong sense of self-efficacy can influence, select and construct the circumstances of their own life and feel less fearful (Bhagat, 2016). When participants were asked if they can handle whatever comes their way, the findings revealed that most of the respondents 38.4% strongly agreed and 46.3% of respondents agreed that they can handle whatever comes their way. Minority of the respondents 2.4% strongly disagreed and 4.3% disagreed that they cannot handle whatever comes their way while 8.5% of respondents remained undecided. The findings show that students can hand whatever comes their way of academic struggle. One respondent during focus group discussion confidently said; though am the one who chose this program does not mean that I don't face challenges and problems. Problems are there be it of money, tight timetable or difficulty subjects, I have to find another plan to solve them (participant, focus group discussion, December 6, 2021).

The influence of personal interest, parents and peer group on career choice among undergraduate students

Students were asked to indicate the one influenced them to choose a career. The responses are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Rate of influence

	Personal interest		Parental influence		Peer influence	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Career choice	105	64	42	28	23	14

The researcher wanted to know different factors influenced career choices among students. The findings showed that majority of the students 64% chose careers according to their interests, that is were not influenced by their parents or peer groups. During focus group discussion one student explained saying;

My father is a business man and my mother is a simple farmer in our village. Parents have their life and I have to prepare mine. I am happy because my parents never forced me to do something concerning my education; they only encouraged me to study hard. I chose what I wanted to do in my future (participant, focus group discussion, December 7, 2021).

Second group was of those who were influenced by their parents to choose careers. In this group there are those who were advised and those who were forced to choose particular programmes by their parents. The findings show that 28% of the respondents chose careers by the influence of their parents. During group discussion some students who were forced by their parents to choose specific courses were happy and others not. One respondent had this to say;

I never thought to be a teacher but a lawyer or to study administration. It is my parents who force me to study this course. It was not my choice. I tried to convince them but they completely refused. My parents refused to listen to what I suggested. At the end they said if I continue insisting they will not support me financially. (Participant, focus group discussion, December 1, 2021).

Minority of the respondents 14% admitted to have been helped or influenced by their friends to choose careers and the university to join. During focus group discussion one student during focus group discussion disclosed that;

Myself I planned and applied to study medicine and I had to go to Morocco where I was admitted. But I could not go due to Corona problem, and then I did not know what to do. My friend whom we were together in high school helped me to choose the program and university (participant, focus group discussion, November 23, 2021).

The relationship of self-efficacy on career choice among undergraduate student

This study applied inferential analysis to find out the Pearson correlation between self-efficacy and career choice among undergraduate students at Ruaha Catholic University. The findings are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between self-efficacy and career choice among students of RUCU

		Respondents	Self-efficacy	Career Choice
Self-efficacy	Pearson Correlation	-.076	1	.165*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.330		.035
	N	164	164	164
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).				
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).				

From table 3, it is evident that there was a relationship between self-efficacy ($r = 0.165$) and career choice among students of RUCU. The researcher concluded that there was a weak positive relationship between self-efficacy and career choice among undergraduate students. This could mean that their state of self-efficacy helped students to decide about the programmes to study. The result of the current study is consistent with the study by Bindu and Padmanabhan (2016) that there was a positive correlation between self-efficacy and career aspirations among students.

However, in terms of significance, the result shows that self-efficacy ($p = .035$) has a positive significant relationship with career choice among students in RUCU. This implies that students depend more on their self-efficacy in choosing careers. Self-efficacy has positive effect on career choice among undergraduate students. Previous study by Basith, Andi and Ichwanto (2020) stated that self-efficacy will always relate with career choice to the academic domain because students with high self-efficacy have strong interest in working on academic tasks through career choice.

V. DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The study was conducted to investigate the influence of self-efficacy in career choice among undergraduate students. The findings of the study revealed that students had high self-efficacy beliefs, thus, they can manage to solve difficult problems. Students believed on their capabilities in performing the behaviours required at a specific situation and that is supported by Social Cognitive Career Theory that people act on their judgments of that they can do and on their beliefs about the likely efforts of various actions (Lent et al, 1994). To remain strong during opposition is one of the elements of self-efficacy of an individual. Students showed that they are able to find ways to go what they want. This result correlates with the study conducted by Reddan (2015) in which students suggested that they were more confident in their ability to solve problems and more aware of possible contacts within the university to assist them in their career development.

Students showed that they are confident in dealing with unexpected events in their daily life. Such beliefs make students remain confident while undergoing preparations for their future lives. The results of the current study correlates with study carried out by Cantos et al (2019) who stated that students are more confident determining what they could do and offer to be able to achieve their career goals because they are the only ones who know themselves. They were confident with their career decision self-efficacy in selecting their goals, planning and problem solving. Self-efficacy needs an individual to focus on accomplishing what was planned. The result shows that students at RUCU can accomplish their planned goals. The findings of this study related to the theoretical framework that the outcome expectation in the context of career choice is viewed as people's belief concerning the way they will satisfy their core values in pursuing a particular career path. Moreover, behaviour is likely to be produced and or sustained based on the previous intentions or goals (Lent et al, 1994).

Confidence in handling different situations, such as, solving problems is a sign that they had a high self-efficacy. The findings show that students are capable of solving problems when they invest the necessary effort to combat those issues. This result is in agreement with the study of Cantos et al., (2019) who found that students' attitude can enhance their abilities to handle problems and issues that may rise in the workplace and make positive skills decision making and conduct good problem-solving skills. Furthermore, students showed that they can remain calm when facing difficulties due to coping abilities they have. The findings of the study correlates with the previous study by Denther, Dochy and Segers (2011) that self-efficacy helps individuals to decide how much effort they will spend on a task, how long they will persist when experiencing difficulties and how resilience they will in detrimental situations. Moreover, they can find solutions when confronted with problem as their self-efficacy influences their efficiency and effectiveness in problem solving. From the findings, it is clear that students face challenges but they cannot hinder them from finding their solutions. This is supported by Pratiwi et al (2019) who confirmed that self-efficacy is an individual's belief in evaluating his or her own ability to achieve goals, overcome obstacles and complete certain goals.

The results concurs with the previous findings by Duru, Soner and Sinan (2021) who revealed that students who could plan and set goals and had problem-solving skills rarely experienced a lack of readiness. Thus gathering occupational information, planning, setting goals and developing problem-solving skills decreased career indecisiveness. Their stand concurred with the explanation of self-efficacy that it beliefs to influence individual's choices of goal-directed activities, expenditure of efforts, persistence in the face of challenges and obstacles (Bandura 1997). Lastly, majority of students showed their ability to handle anything they face on the way. This finding relates to the study by Dawis (2005) who stated that career choice is a process of continual adjustment and

accommodation of new idea. Thus, by being ready to handle whatever comes their way, student are capable of adjusting and accommodating new ideas all the time.

About the factors influenced students to choose their careers many of them admitted to have followed their interests. The finding is supported by Amani and Mkumbo (2018) who said that parents' role is to provide a variety of career information and let their children discover their talents, taking into account their needs, personality and interests. The study carried by Ngusa and Kilumile (2016) recommended that, Parents should continue giving career guidance at home, as the practice yields positive results towards student' career choice preparedness. Parents should not play a major role in determining career choice for their children. Their supportive role in determining and directing their children's future should be carried with great care so that they do not dictate the career decisions for their children (Amani & Mkumbo, 2018). Students need parents' support during their studies but in choosing what to study let students themselves decide.

Despite of the importance of personal interest in career choice among students, still some were influenced by parents or peers. Though the number of those influenced by other people in choosing careers is small, has some impact to students. In some extent parental and peer influence is important in career choice. This result is in accord with the findings of Naz et al. (2014) who admitted that peer and friends dominated in academic choices and career decision making processes. They added that peer and friends have positive role in selection of schools, subjects, books and facilitation in homework and co-curricular activities. Also the study by Ogutu, Odera and Magaria (2017) who admitted that peer pressure and friends had much influence on career decision making among students. Those students who admitted to have influenced by peer group are happy, but those who were forced by their parents some were not happy with what they are studying.

VI. CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

Based on the results of the study, it has been concluded that self-efficacy is related to the process of career choice among undergraduate students. Students are confident on what they choose as a preparation for their future careers, but still need more support to define their long term career plans that can help reach and live their dreams. It is evident from the outcome of this study that many students were not forced by their parents or peers in choosing careers but still some awareness needed to those parents who force their children to study particular programmes. The result revealed that self-efficacy has more positive impact than parents and peers on career choice among students. Generally, the results of the study indicated that the research participants had a positive self-efficacy which may have helped many of them to choose their careers. Moreover, the study revealed that there is a positive relationship between self-efficacy and career choice among undergraduate students.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The involvement of students in career choice is important as they will follow their interests for their future lives. The interest will encourage students to discover more on activities that they are interested in. The study can be explained to different educational institutions of different levels in Tanzania to enhance self-efficacy of students, that is, to increase confidence in their decision-making and learning process. The study recommended that students should develop confidence in life and on what they are doing. Confidence will help students in planning for their future careers, choosing their careers, in learning process. Also the study recommended that students need always to evaluate themselves positively that are capable to succeed on what they are doing.

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