
Determinants Influencing Career Path Decisions of Thai Gen Z Economic Graduates with a Bachelor's Degree

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the determinants influencing career path decisions among Thai Gen Z economic graduates with a bachelor's degree. With the subconscious weight placed on this important decision, individuals need to be more attentive, as this decision dictates their future. The research had three objectives: (1) to identify and understand the key factors influencing Thai Gen Z economics graduates' decisions between pursuing a master's degree or entering the workforce after graduation; (2) to identify the intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing the career choices of Thai Gen Z graduates with a bachelor's degree; and (3) to evaluate the impact of current economic conditions and educational experiences on these career decisions in Thailand. The research employs a quantitative approach to examine how various selected determinants, including sex, economic situation, financial situation, employment opportunities, interest, influences, and culture, influence career path decisions among Thai Gen Z economic students. A total of 202 valid responses were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms, shared among friends and peers using a convenience sampling method to assess the impact of various determinants on career path decisions. Using a 95% confidence level ($Z = 1.96$), a 5% margin of error, and a 0.5 proportion, the minimum sample size required was calculated to be approximately 139 respondents. However, to reduce potential self-selection bias, this study targeted at least twice that number, aiming for over 200 respondents. The survey was split into three sections: demographic profile, decisions, and factors influencing career path decision-making, with a total of 34 questions that illustrated each respondent's unique opinion on the matter. The ordered logit model was computed on the Gretl software to analyze the data collected. This study reveals three main findings. (1) Personal interest and external opinions are two key determinants influencing the choice between pursuing further study and entering the workforce. (2) Intrinsic motivations outweigh

extrinsic considerations, with passion and personal fulfillment serving as primary drivers of career compatibility, while economic and social factors were not significant. (3) The rejection of H1, H2, and H3 indicates that broader economic conditions, financial incentives, and employment opportunities do not significantly shape decisions. Instead, intrinsic motivation, particularly personal interest, emerges as the dominant factor guiding career path choices among Thai Gen Z economics graduates.

Keywords: Career path decisions, Economics, Student, Generation Z, Thailand.