

Abstract

The objective of the study is to study factors that influence decision of second-year vocational diploma students of a vocational college in Saraburi Province to choose careers. The sample consists of 88 students in three subject programs. Data are collected using the questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS and statistical tools of percentage and arithmetic mean, while testing the relationship between variables using the average difference of 0.15 and above.

The samples are mostly female, 20 years of age, with domicile in Saraburi Province. Their parents have an education below the bachelor's degree level, engaged in trade or self-employed, with a household income of more than 5,000 baht but less than 20,000 baht. Most of the samples are first-born in a family of 1-2 children. On education, most samples study business administration, with an educational achievement of 3.00 and above. They have a good level of computer skills with a moderate English language skill and engage in non-income-generating activities during their study.

The sample group admits that three factors influence their decision to choose careers, i.e. personal factors, work factors, and family workers. The personal factors are the most influential with an average score of 2.43 out of 3.00, while work and family workers share the average score of 2.41. The subsidiary factors that see the highest average score of 2.67 out of 3.00 is work compensation in the form of money, thus indicating that monetary compensation exercises the highest influence in the samples' career choice.

The testing of the relationship between variables reveals that the male samples find personal factors more influential in the decision to choose careers than their female counterparts. The families of the samples with a monthly income less than 5,000 baht think that work and personal factors have a greater influence in the decision to choose careers than those with a monthly income of 5,001 baht and above, while those with a monthly income less than 40,000 baht consider that family factors assert

greater influence than those with a monthly income more than 40,000 baht. The samples who study business administration view that work and personal factors have a greater influence on the decision to choose careers than their counterparts studying the craft program and the service industry program. The samples in the service industry program and the business administration program find that family factors exert a greater influence on decision to choose careers than their counterparts in the craft program. In addition, those with an educational achievement of 3.00-4.00 find that work factors have more influence in the decision to choose careers than those with an educational achievement less than 3.00.

The study recommends that the educational institute should improve its career guidance service through the existing information technology system and that it should foster relationships with business operations or other agencies to help provide students with an opportunity to get better access to work sources. At the same time, the students should be more active in seeking new ways to better find employment.