

## **Relationship between Career Intention and Academic Performance of University Students: A Study Based on Khulna Region, Bangladesh**

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### **Abstract**

Every student in their academic life faces dilemmas regarding their career choice, and academic performance plays a big role here. This present study seeks to investigate the relationship between career intention and academic performance of University students. Along with these, the study also aims to examine the relationships among multiple demographic variables of University students. Moreover, a self-administered questionnaire survey was conducted to collect the primary data from the participants. Altogether 100 students studying at different universities participated in the survey. The hypothesis of this study is entitled to determine the relationship between career intention regarding "Entrepreneurship" and "Academic performance". This study also determines the relationship between career intention regarding "Corporate job" and "Academic performance". However, to process the data and to test the research hypothesis, correlation and linear regression analysis were employed. The analysis of cross-tabulation has been conducted to represent the relationship between demographic characteristics and the academic performance of the respondents. The study findings reveal that there is a very weak relationship between entrepreneurial mindset and academic performance. Hence, this study also clarifies that there is a strong relationship between a job-oriented mindset and academic performance. The findings of this research provide a better understanding to the policymakers of universities about developing the curriculum such that the university students can be benefitted while setting their career goals, and these will be beneficial for the society as a whole.

**Keywords:** *Academic Performance, Students, Career Intention, Entrepreneurship, Job.*



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### **INTRODUCTION**

Career intention plays a vital role in forming a student's attitude. (Cano et al., 2017). This research defines career intention as "a status of mind that people desire to choose a particular career path for themselves". In this study, career intentions are divided into two dimensions, entrepreneurial intention and job intention. Wu and Wu (2008) consider an entrepreneurial mindset as status while starting a new adventure. Mhango (2006) defined entrepreneurial intention as an intention to study and pursue a business career path. Synthesizing from all scholars' opinions cited above, this research uses the definition of entrepreneurial career intention as "the conscious state of mind that occurs before action and directs attention to entrepreneurial actions such as starting a new business and becoming an entrepreneur" Profession intention, on the other hand, is "a state of mind in which a student aspires to find a suitable job for himself or herself". On the other hand, job intention can be defined as "a state of mind in which a student wishes to find a suitable job for him/herself".

In recent research, university students in Colombia were asked about their career plans. According to Cano et al. (2017), students with good academic performance have a lower inclination to become entrepreneurs than students with average or lower academic performance. While members of an academic community can have an impact on a student's academic and career choices, the desire for a difficult, relevant, intriguing, and creative career path is equally important (Honeycutt Jr and Thelen, 2003). Based on Peterman and Kennedy's (2003) research study, students' career preferences are provoked by the university's promoted entrepreneurial education. Yet, in the study of Kadir et al. (2012), earlier researchers have made it clear that to specify career intention and to broaden the knowledge about entrepreneurship, education related to entrepreneurship is useful. In another study, Chuang et al. (2009) claimed that good academic performance provides students with more employment opportunities and cultivates their abilities to

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make significant contributions to their chosen fields. According to the study of Ramoni, S. A. (2016), some Nigerian universities have illustrated entrepreneurial knowledge in their course curriculum. In this regard, the universities of Khulna city have arranged their academic curriculum in such a manner that they include courses related to career planning and entrepreneurship. Kothari (2013) revealed in his study that good academic performance and entrepreneurial intention are likely to be associated positively, provided that the individual wants to become an entrepreneur by choice. He also argued that under-performing students eventually fail to get a good job and to compel them to opt for a business career. In this phase, intended to be an entrepreneur is negatively related to academic performance for any student. On the other hand, Siyanbola et al. (2009) denote that there is no relationship between academic performance and entrepreneurial intention. So, a career can be defined as someone's work activities.

The goal of this study is twofold. First, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between career intention and academic performance of Khulna University students. Academic performance, which indicates how well a student commits to the activities and studies set through by the institution, is being used to predict performance in educational establishments. Academic performance can be defined as "a student's ability to successfully attain educational goals". Factors such as grades, attendance, standardized tests, and extra-curricular activities can determine students' academic performance level and quality. Next, the study aims to examine the relationships among multiple demographic variables of Khulna University students, such as age, gender, marital status, and so on. A series of studies have indicated that the career intentions of university students may affect their academic performance. However, no previous research has investigated if there is any direct relationship between career intention and academic performance.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Career Intention**

The purpose of education is to enhance the knowledge and ability to properly plan the future that helps students select their career paths (Meddour et al., 2016). Career intention is considered a defining phrase of a student's life, and every student has to pass this way. Career choice affects the individual's life, accomplishments, and works because it has an impact on the overall lifetime (Napompech, 2011). However, career intention is a significant issue, considering that the decision is influenced by numerous factors (Nyamwange, 2016). After completing graduation, some students prefer to set their career in a big organization; some like to run their own business; some others want to start freelancing (Haase, 2011). Self-efficacy, family interest, personal interest, and economic matters are the factors that affect the selection of the carrier (Meddour et al., 2016). Along with that, family interest, self-learning, teachers' influence, and subject choice also help students to select their careers (Shumba & Naong, 2012). Let along with all those things, Koech et al. (2016) pointed out that peer influence like friend's influence, parents' influence, personal interest, and job opportunities assist individuals in selecting over and above other matters influence university students to select a career that is based on academic accomplishments, financial consideration, remuneration, influences on media, the opportunity for employment, gender, social acceptance of job or profession, social recognition, and satisfaction of doing work (Kazi & Akhlaq, 2017).

### **Career Intention regarding Entrepreneurship**

Entrepreneurial career intention enhances the opportunity for employability because it creates options for graduate students (Kim-Soon et al., 2014). Entrepreneurship enhances career opportunities that are based on self-employment options. These career options create employability for the graduates, especially the youth (Fatoki, 2014). The employability rate has also been enhanced through it (Branchet et al., 2011). Entrepreneurial career choice illustrates conscious mindsets of individuals that direct the entrepreneurial behavior through personal experience, behavior, and attention (Bird, 1988). Student risk-taking propensity, personal traits, and control beliefs are linked up with

entrepreneurial intention (Zhao & Seibert, 2006). The theory of planned behavior is used to predict intention (Ajzen, 1991), so it illustrates the explanation of behavior and behavioral intention (Krueger et al., 2000). Planned behavior is related to entrepreneurial intention (Ajzen, 1991). Moreover, entrepreneurship as a career enhances the way of social and economic development (Moriano et al., 2012).

### **Career Intention regarding Job**

Several studies found students face career choice dilemmas while deciding upon a specific profession (Watson et al., 2010). According to (Gerber et al., 2009) research, individuals who choose the traditional way for their career intention tend to be more responsible and advancement-focused in their present job. People who tend to choose corporate jobs as their future careers are very much conscious about their whole journey in academic life and are expected to join in different activities from the beginning. However, Grobelna (2017) claims that while deciding upon a future job-oriented career, students' choices are driven by job motivators such as; appreciation, involvement, advancement for growth, etc. Expanding on these findings, researchers also found that, in some cases, when students see a mismatch between the characteristics of the job and their credibility, then there is a high chance of quitting that particular industry. In the opinion of Ng and Gossett (2013), it has come to light that students who are born after 1980 are eventually more interested in choosing a career in the corporate job sector as their contribution.

### **Academic Performance**

Students' academic advancement, development, and learning opportunities depend on the teaching facility, age, gender of the students, economic stability, residential area, and educational opportunities for the students (Ali et al., 2013). Moreover, previous educational outcomes also affect the academic performance of graduate students (Trigwell et al., 2013). According to Korhonen et al. (2016), students' academic performance significantly affects both their educational and occupational aspirations. So on the basis of the Robert (1980) Wisconsin model, better academic performance boosts their mindset on better education and career.

### **Relationship between Career intention and Academic Performance**

An entrepreneurial career is considered a panacea for unemployed youth because it creates employment opportunities, and a large number of the workforce can join there (Osakede et al., 2017). Along with that entrepreneurial career, activities are engaged with the academic performance of the individuals. Based on the previous research, it has been mentioned that entrepreneurial education enhances the career development of the students as well as boosts their interest in that field (Fayolle, 2018; Lent et al., 1994).

Students choosing a career as a job holder become conscious about their academic performance because in the job market high CGPA is needed. According to (Suresh et al., 2018) as traditional learning can be seen as an expensive platform, students who prefer to be corporate leaders technically depend much on tech-based platforms to improve their academic performance.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This is the descriptive research that is performed to identify responsible reasons and influences on certain factors. This study intends to identify the perception of students' career intentions that affects their academic performance. The research questions are related to identifying the distinctive career intentions of students and their influence on their current academic performance. In this study, students of Khulna University are taken as a primary source. A close-ended questionnaire was prepared to survey the target population. 5.0-point Likert scale was used in this questionnaire ranging from 1= Strongly disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5=Strongly agree. The data sources were those original data collected from Khulna University students and analyzed by the responses of respondents by Google form. In this study, we select all the students of Khulna University as our population. The population size (N) of this study is approximately 21,647 (Khulna University, Khulna University of Engineering & Technology, Northern University of Business & Technology Khulna, North Western University, Khulna). The convenience sampling technique, a non-probability sampling technique, has been conducted to select the sample. Therefore, the sample size is 100 in number (Singh & Masuku, 2014).

Data has been collected from survey questionnaires, previous research, articles, journals, etc. The sources were critically reviewed for data sufficiency and accuracy. For this purpose, one set of structured questionnaires consisting

of 13 close-ended questions was used to collect primary data from the students of Khulna University. The questionnaire was divided into three sections. In the first section, there are some demographic questions. The second section consists of general questions about career intention and academic performance. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the relationship between career intention and academic performance among the students. The 9 items scale of Awan and Ahmby (2017) & ÖZLEN and Arnaut (2013) was used to measure career intention. A five-item scale of academic performance was measured by Delfino (2019).

This quantitative study has been analyzed through statistical measurement tools such as Correlation and regression by proving established hypotheses. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software has been used in processing and analyzing data because SPSS is a flexible, adaptable way to get very specific with even the most complicated data sets. However, SPSS is also useful for drawing an expert conclusion. Internal item reliability has been examined with Cronbach's Alpha test. Descriptive, bivariate, and multivariate analysis has been implemented on the data collected with descriptive statistics. Based on the collected data, bivariate and multivariate analysis has been used at the later stage to identify correlation and regression among the variables and indicators. The questionnaire and collected data are far into and analyzed through the software to achieve the research objectives.

### 3.9 Conceptual Research Model

The conceptual framework was developed so that it can prove a clear understanding of the hypothesis.

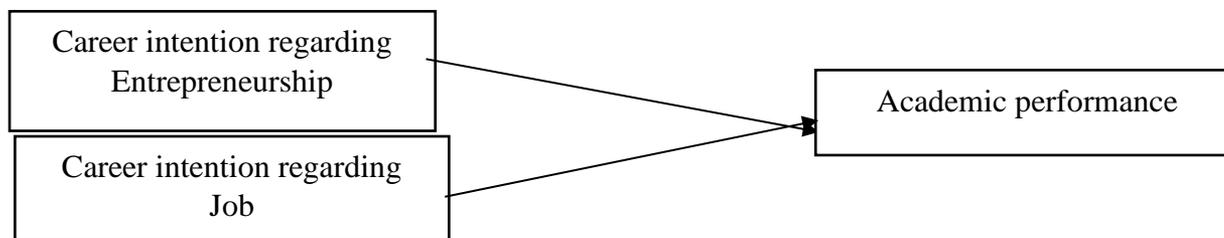


Figure: Conceptual framework

### 3.10 Proposed Hypothesis

H01: There is no relationship between "Career intention regarding Entrepreneurship" and "Academic Performance"

H1: There is a relationship between "Career intention regarding Entrepreneurship" and "Academic Performance"

H02: There is no relationship between "Career intention regarding job" and "Academic Performance".

H2: There is a relationship between "Career intention regarding job" and "Academic Performance".

## DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

### Reliability Analysis

Reliability is used to measure the consistency of the given measurement, and Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) is used to measure the strength consistency. The higher the coefficient, the better the reliability of what the instrument intends to measure. Variables are carrier intention and academic performance.

### Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.685	14

The table indicates that Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha$ ) value for all variables is higher than 0.65, which means they are acceptable and have good statistics (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

**Table 2: Descriptive Analysis**

Characteristics	Classification	Frequency	Percent
Age	18-20	2	2.0
	21-22	20	20.0
	23-25	70	70.0
	26-28	8	8.0
Location of the respondents	Khulna Division	80	80.0
	Outside Khulna	20	20.0
CGPA of the respondents	Less than 3.00	10	10.0
	3.00-3.24	22	22.0
	3.25-3.49	30	30.0
	3.50-3.74	18	18.0
	3.75-4.00	20	20.0

From the table, we can understand that the maximum number of respondents are aged between 23-25 years, and minor responses were from 18-20 and 26 to 28. Among all the respondents, 80% of them are from Khulna, and 20% are from other cities. In terms of CGPA, the table shows that among 50 respondents, the domination lies in between the range of 3.25 to 3. and 15. Hence, the lower frequency of having a CGPA of less than 3.00 shows the average results of all the respondents. 10 respondents have a CGPA of more than 3.75, and this also indicates the higher academic performance of the respondents.

**Table 3: Analysis of Career Intention & Academic Performance**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Career Intention (Entrepreneurship)	3.50	.578
Career Intention (Corporate Job)	3.62	.625
Academic Performance	3.97	.604

The mean of career intention regarding entrepreneurship is 3.50, which refers to the average number of respondents who have agreed upon neutrality in this matter. That means respondents showed little positivity in terms of achieving higher CGPA and having an entrepreneur mindset and in case of starting their own business, specific start-up plan, creative competency of doing the task, etc. The standard deviation is .578. This means there is less variability in respondents' answers.

The mean of 3.62 of career intention regarding corporate job tells that respondents have agreed to strongly agree in most of the matters relating to the relationship between academic performances and choosing a career in a corporate job. Here the standard deviation of .62 shows that the respondent's answers didn't vary by much.

The mean of academic performance-related questions is 3.97, which means that the average respondents have agreed to strongly agree in this matter. This means respondents are sincere about class participation, always meet deadlines, and are ambitious to get a good score, and so on. The standard deviation is .60. This means there is less variability in respondents' answers.

**Table 4: Cross-tabulation (Gender of the respondent \* CGPA of the respondents)**

		CGPA of the respondents					Total
		Less than 3.00	3.00-3.24	3.25-3.49	3.50-3.74	3.75-4.00	
Gender of the respondents	Male	2	10	12	10	14	48
	Female	8	12	18	8	6	52
Total		10	22	30	18	20	100

In the case of male respondents, 48 of the 14 respondents got a CGPA higher than 3.75, while on the other hand, in this range of CGPA among 52 female respondents, only 6 females fit in it. In the case of doing average results ranging from 3.25-3.49, the number of female respondents is higher than the male respondents, which are respectively 18 and 12 in number. Herewith, having a CGPA of less than 3.00, we can see the domination of female respondents, which is 8 in number, and the number of male respondents is only 2. So we can see that the male respondents have performed better than the female respondents.

**Table 5: Cross-tabulation (Marital status \* CGPA of the respondents)**

		CGPA of the respondents					Total
		Less than 3.00	3.00-3.24	3.25-3.49	3.50-3.74	3.75-4.00	
Marital status	Married	0	0	2	2	0	4
	Unmarried	10	22	28	16	20	96
Total		10	22	30	18	20	100

In the case of unmarried respondents, 96 of the 20 respondents got a CGPA higher than 3.75, while on the other hand, in this range of CGPA among 4 married respondents, no one fits in it. In the case of doing average results ranging from 3.25-to 3.49, the number of unmarried respondents is higher than the married respondents, which are respectively 28 and 2 in number. Herewith, having a CGPA of less than 3.00 we can see the domination of unmarried respondents, which is 10 in number. So we can see that the unmarried respondents have performed better than the married respondents, apart from the fact that there we have found a very small number of married respondents.

**Table 6: Cross-tabulation (Location of the respondents \* CGPA of the respondents)**

		CGPA of the respondents					Total
		Less than 3.00	3.00-3.24	3.25-3.49	3.50-3.74	3.75-4.00	
Location of the respondents	Khulna Division	8	18	28	12	14	80
	Outside Khulna	2	4	2	6	6	20
Total		10	22	30	18	20	100

Among 50 respondents, the number of respondents who are from Khulna is 80, and those who are from outside Khulna are 20. From the cross-tabulation, we can interpret that there is a tendency to achieve a higher CGPA range from 3.75

to 4.00 has been seen from the respondents outside Khulna, and the number is 3 among 10 of them. On the contrary, 28 respondents from Khulna achieve a CGPA between 3.25 to 3.49 whereas from the respondents outside Khulna this number is 2. Though the respondents from outside Khulna are small in number, they have a tendency to achieve higher CGPA than the respondents from Khulna.

### Bivariate Analysis

The bivariate analysis represents the simultaneous analysis of two variables (attributes).

**Table 7: Correlations**

		Career Intention(Entrepreneurship)	Academic Performance
Career Intention (Entrepreneurship)	Pearson Correlation	1	.241
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.092
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.241	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.092	

This study intends to clarify the relationship between Career intention regarding "Entrepreneurship" and "Academic Performance".

H01: There is no relationship between "Career intention regarding Entrepreneurship" and "Academic Performance"

H1: There is a relationship between "Career intention regarding Entrepreneurship" and "Academic Performance".

Our results indicated a ( $P > 0.05$ ) by which we accepted the Null hypothesis and concluded that Career intention regarding "Entrepreneurship" and "Academic Performance" does not have any relationship.

Further investigation showed that the relationship between "Entrepreneurship" and "Academic Performance" is 0.241, which tells us that there lies a very low correlation between the two. We believe the reason for this low correlation might be because "Entrepreneurs" are more likely to engage themselves in developing new ideas for businesses and do not confine themselves to routine studies regularly.

**Table 8: Correlations**

		Career Intention (Corporate Job)	Academic Performance
Career Intention (Corporate Job)	Pearson Correlation	1	.454**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.454**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The study intensely clarifies the purpose of the relationship between "Career intention regarding "Job" and "Academic Performance".

H02: There is no relationship between "Career intention regarding Job" and "Academic Performance".

H2: There is a relationship between "Career intention regarding corporate job" and "Academic Performance".

Our results indicated a ( $P < 0.05$ ) by which we rejected the Null hypothesis and concluded that Career intention regarding "Job" and "Academic Performance" have a relationship. Further investigation showed that the relationship between "Job" and "Academic Performance" is 0.454 means there lies a correlation between these two. We believe the

reason for this correlation might be because students who want to get a good job are more likely to engage themselves in academic activities and are highly motivated to earn a good CGPA for the development of a corporate career.

### Multivariate Analysis

**Table 9: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.241 <sup>a</sup>	.058	.038	.59253

a. Predictors: (Constant), Career Intention regarding Entrepreneurship

In the table, R is 0.241, which represents a weak positive correlation between the independent variable 'Career Intention regarding Entrepreneurship' and the dependent variable 'Academic performance'. An R square value indicates the proportion of variation of the independent variable (Academic performance) explained by the independent variable (Career Intention regarding Entrepreneurship). So, R square also ranges from 0 to 1, and it basically explains the model fit. In this case, the value of  $R^2$  is .058, which measures how much of the variability in the outcome/result is accounted for by the independent variables. In the above table, an adjusted R square of .058 shows that a 5.8 % impact on academic performance can be explained by career intention regarding entrepreneurship.

**Table 10: ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.039	4	1.039	2.959	.092 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	16.852	96	.351		
	Total	17.891	100			

a. Dependent Variable: Academic performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Career Intention regarding Entrepreneurship

Source: Field Survey

The significance value represents the positivity of the model. As the significance value is .092<sup>b</sup> (i.e.,  $p < 0.05$ ), which indicates that the model clarifies relevancy with the data because if the significance value is low, then the model is more relevant.

**Table 11: Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.094	.520		5.951	.000
	Career Intention regarding Entrepreneurship	.252	.146	.241	1.720	.092

a. Dependent Variable: Academic Performance

Source: Field Survey

The table indicating the beta value indicates the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Here, the beta value of .241 shows a positive and significant relationship between Career Intention regarding Entrepreneurship (independent variable) and Academic Performance (dependent variable). In the above table, the 't' statistics help in determining the relative importance of each variable in the model. The significance value is  $p < 0.05$ ,

this shows no impact on Career Intention regarding Entrepreneurship, and the constant is meant to be statistically significant.

**Table 12: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.454 <sup>a</sup>	.206	.189	.54406

a. Predictors: (Constant), Career Intention regarding Job  
Source: Field Survey

The table represents the value of R is 0.454, which indicates a moderately positive correlation between the independent variable 'Career Intention regarding Job' and the dependent variable 'Academic performance'. Along with that, the R square value indicates the proportion of variation of the independent variable (Academic performance) explained by the independent variable (Career Intention regarding Job). In this case, the R square also ranges from 0 to 1, and it basically explains the model fit. So, the value of R<sup>2</sup> is .206, which measures how much of the variability in the outcome/result is accounted for by the independent variables. Then, an adjusted R square of .189 shows that an 18.9 % impact on academic performance can be explained by career intention regarding the job.

**Table 13: ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.683	4	3.683	12.444	.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	14.208	96	.296		
	Total	17.891	100			

a. Dependent Variable: Academic performance  
b. Predictors: (Constant), Career Intention regarding Job

The significance value represents the positivity of the model. As the significance value is .001<sup>b</sup> (i.e.,  $p < 0.05$ ), which indicates that the model clarifies relevancy with the data because if the significance value is low, then the model is more relevant.

**Table 14: Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.386	.457		5.221	.000
	Career Intention regarding Job	.438	.124	.454	3.528	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Academic performance

In the table, the beta value indicates the strength of the relationship between independent and dependent variables. Here, the beta value of .454 shows a positive and significant relationship between Career Intention regarding Job (independent variable) and Academic Performance (dependent variable). So, the 't' statistics help in determining the relative importance of each variable in the model. The significance value is  $p < .001$ , this shows the relative impact of Career Intention regarding the job, and the constant is meant to be statistically significant.

## CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This study seeks to investigate the relationship between career intention and academic performance of University students. It was found that p values for career intention regarding entrepreneurship are not significant and, on the contrary, career intention regarding the job is significant. It indicates that job-oriented students are more concerned

with their academic performance rather than their entrepreneurial mindset. Unlike this study, Kothari (2013) only confined his research to the relationship between entrepreneurial career intention and academic performance. Herewith, (Kuncel et al., 2004) also highlighted a constructive relationship between academic performance and job performance which has been broadly explained in our research. Altogether, this study simply recommends that the universities should focus on students' academic performance so that career intention regarding job and carrier intention regarding entrepreneurship mindset of students can benefit from their academic knowledge so that they can make a contribution to society.

### **Limitations and Further Research**

This research is only confined to students' academic performance rather than other personal or professional level dimensions. Future research can be organized by including other performance dimensions. Along with this, geographical location is a hindrance to this research. This study is done by surveying a short number of samples as university students from the Khulna region of Bangladesh; further research may lead by involving students from other geographic locations. The main contribution of this research will be to contribute a better understanding of how choosing a career is related to a student's academic performance. Thus this study will positively contribute to the policymakers of different universities about developing the course components such that the university students can be benefitted while setting their career goals, and these will be beneficial for the society as a whole.

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