

## **To What Extent are LHS Students Motivated by Financial Benefits As Opposed to Intrinsic Value When Making Career Decisions?**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Throughout LCPS, several high school students face difficult decisions regarding their future. Should they pursue jobs and career choices that allow them best to express themselves in terms of true happiness and passion, or should they employ themselves in occupations that are financially equipped to support them in the long run? A growing materialist culture in modern society increasingly prioritizes wealth, status, and lifestyle aspirations over purpose or meaning in selecting career paths. This can alter student's motives and potentially place pressure on them when discussing their future. As the cost of living rises rapidly, the need for monetary benefits associated with the job market is highly demanded. However, following genuine passions typically enables both higher performance and satisfaction over the long term. While there is research on students' motivations in general, high-achieving student populations that balance their passions against practical considerations receive less attention. This gap in previous scholarly works motivated me to pursue the research and explore the relationship between passion and salary in future careers amongst high school students. To do this I decided to look at and survey LHS, an academically competitive school filled with exceptionally talented and driven young minds.

An initial hypothesis is that when choosing future career paths, most LHS students tend to value monetary compensation over intrinsic fulfillment and enjoyment. This is predicated on the idea that students who achieve well are under more pressure to pursue respectable, well-paying careers.

It's worth noting that before conducting, and during conduction of this study assumptions have to be made. It is assumed that surveyed students plan to have a future after high school where they employ themselves in the workforce. This assumption is necessary because survey responses can be seen as fraudulent and the data could be interpreted as not being relevant to the study if this is not assumed. Another assumption is that students respond honestly when completing surveys, as

it ensures that the data collected accurately reflects the ideas of students and therefore gives the study validity. Lastly, this study assumes that the collected sample is representative of the broader student population at LHS, as this allows for the findings to be generalized to the perspectives of the students at LHS.

In the context of this study, several concepts should be defined. When discussing career motivations, it refers to the incentives that drive and motivate students to pursue a specific career. The Likert Scale is a quantitative tool used to determine the degree to which respondents agree or disagree with a question. It is, in the context of this study, a scale numbered one through 10, with one signifying strong disagreement and 10 indicating strong agreement with the question. Financial incentives or monetary benefits refer to money and its motivators or benefits when associated with certain careers. An example of this is the salary a job offers which motivates students to explore that profession. Discussion of passion, on the other hand, denotes a strong enthusiasm and intrinsic joy for a particular career.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Many students face direct or implicit messaging that lucrative professions should be the ultimate goal regardless of inherent interests or talents. With climbing costs of living and education debts, pragmatism understandably competes with self-actualization in shaping those pivotal decisions determining vocational trajectories (Nyamwange 96). However, following genuine passions typically enables both higher performance and satisfaction over the long term. This review explores students' motivational balances between financial security and intrinsic fulfillment in charting their prospective career directions, by synthesizing findings from a variety of credible studies to learn the extent to which students prioritize financial compensations over their passion for certain careers, by considering monetary incentives, familial pressures, and personal fulfillment.

According to Adán Rubio, Staff Writer for The Daily Toreador, Jay Killough, director of the Texas Tech University Career Center, claims how those who primarily seek to obtain a career in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), do it for the sole purpose of the financial benefits, therefore, often experiencing stress from the money they thought would be their source of happiness. Killough mentions how if you're happy in your job, there's a better chance you're healthier, more productive, and more engaged (Rubio). Amidst the emphasis on financial incentives, counselors and career specialists are pushing high schoolers to pursue a balance between monetary compensation and personal fulfillment in their future careers. They are repeatedly warning high school students not to prioritize wealth when making career decisions as it is not in the best interest of their general well-being and productivity. Stacy Caviel-Watson, college and career readiness specialist of the Lubbock Independent School District, corroborates

Killough's connections as he states that you need to find a field you enjoy when discussing how students who tend to chase the money might not make that money (Rubio). Dr. Nancy T. Pascual's, Director of Office of Student Development Services at the University of Rizal System, findings help to support these statements. In her study, *Factors Affecting High School Students' Career Preference: A Basis for Career Planning Program*, she found that most of the courses preferred by students were the "popular" or well-known courses such as engineering, while the least popular courses were courses such as agriculture (Pascual 11). Through her article, she concluded that when students decide what career to pursue, they take into account factors like money rather than personalities they have. Building off of Pascual's ideas, Francesca Borgonovi, from the Institute of Education at University College London, conducted a multifaceted study on the relationship between a student's motivation to become a teacher. When contrasted to a profession in engineering or the technology industry, she discovered that providing a competitive salary can increase the appeal of a teaching career. For instance, she reported that in Australia, candidates who would not have become high school teachers would increase by 7.6% in response to a 10% pay increase for teachers compared to other occupations (Borgonovi 4). Showing that an increase in the salary despite the job always attracts people as no matter what job it is, if it offers a higher salary students are tended to be drawn towards that profession, expressing that students prioritize financial rewards over most other considerations.

Given that a substantial increase in salary relative to other occupations is a rare occurrence, high school students tend to gravitate towards careers that have a history of being financially rewarding and stable. Amy Binder, from the University of California San Diego, explores the likelihood of high schoolers engaging in lucrative careers such as finance, consulting, and engineering. She discovered that these students are driven towards these occupations because of the perceived prestige associated with them, suggesting that students are not really following their intrinsic interests, but rather their extrinsic goals like money or social status (Binder 26). Kazi Ahmed, at the Institute of Business Management, conducted a quantitative research study where his questionnaire aimed to explore the factors influencing student's career choices. His survey concluded that student's economic demands outweigh their interests in the field when making career decisions. Aligning with the conclusions drawn by Binder's study, Ahmed reinforces the idea that students are prioritizing their desire for financial status over a true passion for their future occupational choices. Melissa Roderick, from the University of Chicago, expands on this dynamic by directing an interview on a specific student. During this interview, the student displayed interest in attending a certain school, because of the education it offered, but primarily because the alumni at this school are now making a lot of money (Roderick 26). Roderick was able to conclude that monetary incentives certainly play a big role in career choice adding to the work done by previous researchers.

However, another notable cause for students to lean towards careers that offer higher pay is in fact familial pressures. Pascual's study shows how the occupations of a student's father played a significant role in the career decision development of students. She conducted a chi-squared test to explore the relationship between these variables and discovered that parents are often choosing courses for their children. Parents are also advising students to pursue the dominant profession in the family (Pascual 12). Fathers' occupations may have influenced students' preferences since, as the family's primary provider of income, they usually meet the needs of the household financially, showing an evident relationship with the desire for careers that are able to be rewarding financially. Contributing to this theory, Pamela Aschbacher of the California Institute of Technology found that different ethnic groups place different career pressures on their children. Her study noted that Asian American parents viewed careers in STEM as pathways to success, income, and social status (Aschbacher 577). Aschbacher's findings help to form the conclusion that some students are academically pressured to pursue a career that pays a high salary as that is the way to achieve financial success and a prestigious reputation.

Although several students do tend to prioritize financial gain when making decisions on their future career paths, there does exist a medium where students find the balance between a profession that they love and gain joy from but also provides them with financial support. Brenda Dublin, from Eastern Visayas State University, advocates students to strive for this middle ground in her research. Through her standardized survey questionnaire, she found results indicating that 11th-grade students are influenced by their personality, parents, job opportunities, and interests when navigating career choices (Dublin 29). Suggesting that when choosing a career to pursue, several students consider a variety of factors, indicating that their motives go beyond the monetary compensation, as they consider their personality and interests to see if a certain job fits them and provides both fulfillment and financial success. Beverly Burnell, from the Plattsburgh State University of New York, expands on Dublin's study, making it evident that students' considerations extend beyond financial incentives. Burnell interviewed three students and gathered qualitative data to support this idea. In her interviews, she discovered that these students had familial and emotional instability in their lives which was a primary motivator for them to seek work to provide for their families. One student in particular, Ellie, demonstrated a desire for a nuanced approach to a job that offers both intrinsic value and financial security (Burnell 107). She discussed how she was highly motivated by her mother's financial struggles and wanted to support her through a profession she loved.

While monetary considerations are often the primary influence, factors such as intrinsic motivations, familial situations, and others certainly do play significant roles in students' vocational trajectories. The sources illustrate the importance of considering a variety of factors when making life-altering decisions when looking at career paths. Most importantly, however,

the synthesis and analysis of these findings suggest a need for further research to really explore the relationship between the motivators of high school students and their decisions on future careers. This encouraged the study of this interplay, as I noticed a lack of research on academically excelling students who are financially supported by their families and aren't pressured to bring in as much income as possible, showing that they have leeway in their future careers. This dynamic sparked the curiosity on whether students like this would still continue to pursue monetarily rewarding careers or do their intrinsic interests have influence to some extent, so I decided to conduct a study on students at a local high school, as the students are academically excelling and financially stable. To connect to the prior research and fill this gap, this study aims to determine the extent to which LHS students are motivated by financial benefits as opposed to intrinsic value when making career decisions.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between financial incentives and intrinsic interests in the career motivations of LHS students, and to understand the career influences of modern high school students and use this knowledge to inform and provide actionable insights for career counselors in high schools across the nation. Therefore a thorough survey research study was conducted to determine the degree to which LHS students are driven to choose careers based on monetary incentives as opposed to passion. Conducting the survey with a sizable sample from LHS allowed for collecting enough data to identify potential variations in career motivations. A combination of open-ended and Likert scale questions were included in the survey. This combination made it possible to gather both quantitative and qualitative data, which gave statistical insights into general trends and more in-depth information on the role of both intrinsic values and monetary expectations on a high school student when evaluating their future careers.

### **Subjects:**

No vulnerable populations were surveyed, as the subjects of this study were made up of all LHS students, aiming to ensure inclusivity regardless of academic performance, race, gender, and other demographic factors. This approach recognized that career motivations are influenced by a wide range of factors that may differ among students, and it attempted to capture a diverse range of perspectives and experiences, rather than specifying certain grade levels or demographics. Additionally, this research process was granted approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure that it adhered to ethical guidelines and that all participants of the study would remain anonymous. Students in grades 9-12 at LHS were specifically chosen as they allowed for a comprehensive analysis of career motivations, resulting in insights that can be generalized to a

larger student body. They were also chosen to pertain to the gap of career motivations of academically excelling and high-achieving students.

**Research Instrument:**

The student survey utilized in this study was influenced by the study of Cheryl Carrico, a member of the Department of Engineering Education at Virginia Tech, in “A *Qualitative Analysis of Career Choice Pathways of College Oriented Rural Central Appalachian High School Students* (Carrico).” While Carrico's study was conducted through an interview process, this study opted for a survey methodology in the research to maximize the number of responses obtained. The survey distributed in this research was influenced by Dublin’s questionnaire utilized in her study “*Factors Influencing Career Preference of Junior High School Students for Senior High School Study*” (Dublin 29). Table 1 depicts the survey utilized in this study, which was composed of six questions with five of them being open-ended questions and one of them being a Likert scale question. Students were asked to rank how much salary level influenced their career choice on a scale of 1-10 with “1” representing salary having no influence at all, and “10” representing that the level of salary is heavily considered when discussing their future career. This combination of survey questions allowed for both qualitative and quantitative data, which greatly assisted in deeply understating the relationship between a career entailing salary benefits and a career offering true intrinsic joy. Additionally, as depicted in Figure 1, before moving onto the survey students were required to have parental consent.

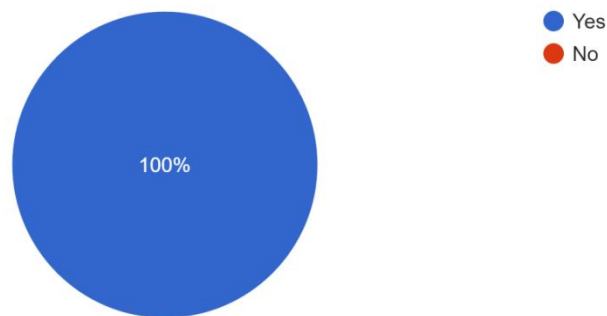
**Table 1: Questionnaire distributed to LHS students**

1. If you had to choose between a career you were extremely passionate about but paid a lower salary, or one you didn't enjoy as much but paid a high salary, which would you choose?
2. On a scale of 1-10, how much does salary level influence your choice of career path?
3. What are some of your passions/hobbies?
4. What is the realistic minimum yearly salary you would like to have?
5. What are some jobs you would like to have in the future?
6. What is your dream job?



**Figure 1: Pie chart depicting that all students had to have parental consent before taking the survey**

Do you have parental consent?  
29 responses



**Procedure:**

Hundreds of students were electronically invited to participate in the form of email, text messages, and social media platforms. Students who expressed interest in participating received a parental consent form which they must sign before proceeding to the survey. The parental consent form provided the research question, the overview of the study, and the questions included in the survey to ensure full transparency and informed consent from both students and their parents. After parental signature and approval, the participants returned the form to me, and were then electronically provided with the survey for completion.

**FINDINGS**

**Quantitative Data:**

The survey consisted of six questions, with each question pertaining to achieving different individual statistics to contribute to the bigger idea of the research study. Quantitatively, the questions of “On a scale of 1-10, how much does salary level influence your choice of career path?” and “What is the realistic minimum yearly salary you would like to have?” provided valuable insights into the understanding of students' career motives. The Likert scale question was made to gauge the quantitative impact of salary on students. This numerical scale directly addresses the research question as it allows for a systematic assessment of the extent to which LHS students are motivated by careers that offer financial incentives. As shown in Figure 2, of the 29 student respondents, 27 of them listed seven and above on a scale of 1-10, showcasing

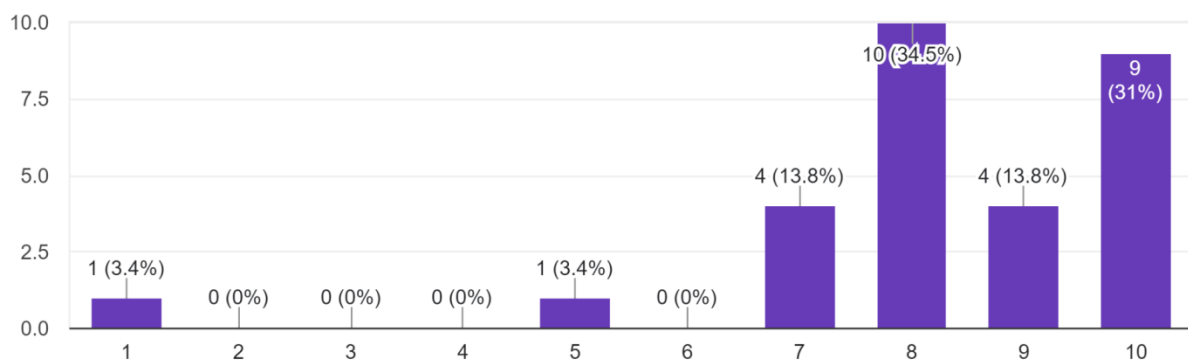
that the majority of students surveyed are greatly influenced by the level of salary when deciding their future careers. The mean of the data responses was 8.28, displaying an incredibly strong overall influence of financial considerations. In addition, with a mode of eight, it becomes apparent that a substantial number of respondents consistently rated salary levels as highly influential when making career decisions.

Moreover, when analyzing students' minimum salary expectations, the theme of heavy monetary influences was noted, as 75% of students listed their minimum salary expectation as six figures or more. About only five people were willing to accept a salary under 100k, as the overwhelming majority expressed interest in obtaining a starting salary greater than \$100,000 and some even stated up to \$300,000. The average expected income amongst the respondents was rather high, with a mean minimum salary of \$137,750. Furthermore, the \$100,000 mode for minimum salary expectations indicates that a sizable percentage of respondents were willing to accept no less than 100,00 dollars. Which, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, is almost double the national average income of \$59,384 (Punjwani). Together, these results offer strong evidence that students' future ambitions are significantly influenced by financial rewards, highlighting the central role that monetary benefits play in determining their career objectives. Therefore, these findings support the original research question, which aims to determine the degree to which LHS students choose higher-paying occupations over their passions, emphasizing the significant role that money plays in shaping their career goals and motivations.

**Figure 2: Distribution of respondents' ratings (1-10) indicating the extent of salary influence on their career decisions**

On a scale of 1-10, how much does salary level influence your choice of career path?

29 responses





### **Qualitative Data:**

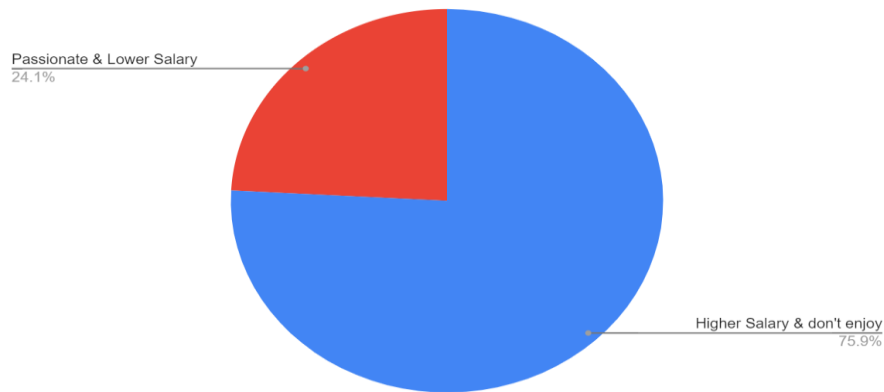
As shown in Figure 3, when asked which career they would pick if they had to choose between one they loved deeply but paid less money, and one they didn't enjoy as much but paid more money, student responses continued to follow a trend as 75.9% of them would opt to choose a career that they didn't like but offered a higher salary. This question and its responses are the most important pieces of evidence in relation to the study as this shows that when presented with an opportunity for a career, students tend to choose jobs that offer higher salaries compared to the job that provides them with intrinsic values and aligns with their passion. The data shows a direct answer to the research question making this the most valuable insight and evidence when compared to the other statistics. The idea that LHS students choose careers based more on money than on passion is strongly supported by this data. This pattern is consistent with the earlier evidence listed showing that salaries have a major impact on students' career decisions and set high expectations for minimum salaries. This finding, which emphasizes the importance of financial incentives in influencing students' career motives, directly relates to the original research question. It offers more proof that most students give financial rewards priority when given the option to choose between passion and salary.

Lastly, students were asked a series of questions to find out if their passions align with their dream jobs. By analyzing these responses, conclusions started to develop. Students surveyed listed a variety of passions and interests ranging from sports and arts to technology. This diversity supports the gap as high-achieving students tend to have multifaceted talents and interests. When asked about their future jobs, students expressed interest in impactful fields of study like engineering, medicine, and law, while others articulated curiosity for entrepreneurship and sports. It's worth noting that many students mentioned aspirations for leadership roles such as becoming CEOs and presidents, once again illustrating the ambitious nature of academically competitive and privileged students. The data illustrated that only 37.9% of students surveyed had their dream job aligned with something related to the passions they listed. As depicted in Table 2, students listed passions such as "soccer and driving" but when asked about jobs they would like to have in the future they listed "computer science or data analyst," showing that there is no connection between their passions and their future career aspirations. This evidently shows that most LHS students strive for monetary benefits in preference to careers aligned with their passions and interests. This interplay is one of the most significant observations made as it shows that students prioritize careers that are often impactful and are monetary plentiful. Most students tend not to explore their current passions like "Tennis and ping pong" and extend them into their future careers as they rather become Anesthesiologists or "Some kind of money-making doctor." Together, the evidence gathered from this study works to support the hypothesis and research question that high-achieving LHS students tend to prioritize financial benefits over

intrinsic interests when making career decisions. This offers insightful information about the intricate interactions that shape students' career goals between ambition, passion, and financial considerations.

**Figure 3: Pie chart illustrating respondents' preferences between passion-driven careers with lower salaries versus less enjoyable careers offering higher pay**

If you had to choose between a career you were extremely passionate about but paid a lower salary, or one you didn't enjoy as much but paid a high salary, which would you choose?



**Table 2: Student responses to questions discussing the relationship between their passions and career aspirations**

Students	What are some of your passions/hobbies?	What are some jobs you would like to have in the future?	What is your dream job?
Student 1	Soccer, Track, XC	some type of engineering	Somewhere where I can have an above average salary
Student 2	Fantasy Football	Businessman/ Entrepreneur	Seller of certain goods
Student 3	Dance, Art, color guard, and reading	Forensic Psychologist, Clinical Psychologist, Therapist.	Forensic Psychologist
Student 4	Thinking innovatively to create solutions to	Some kind of engineer	Automotive engineer/designer of some sort

	my problems		
Student 5	Music and Art	I want to be a math tutor or a barista for a first job, but ultimately become a therapist or a psychologist.	Clinical therapist and/or psychologist
Student 6	Selling things, making stuff.	Computer Science	Computer Science
Student 7	art and tennis	dermatologist endocrinologist	dermatologist
Student 8	Politics, reading, writing	Politician	President
Student 9	Reading, sleeping, singing, dancing, baking	Data analyst	I don't have a dream job nor do I think I will have one
Student 10	soccer and driving	computer science or data analyst	something that pays me more than 500k
Student 11	making money E-Commerce Selling Shoes Investing in stocks and bonds Day trading cryptocurrency Starting and managing a small business	President, CEO of Microsoft	CEO of TESLA
Student 12	Soccer	LHS boys soccer coach	LHS boys soccer coach
Student 13	Coding and tennis	Software developer	A CEO or pro tennis player
Student	Tennis, ping pong,	Anesthesiologist	Some kind of money-making doctor

14	stuff with friends		
Student 15	Hanging out with friends in my free time, playing instruments or games, reading books, and going to the gym.	Technological based jobs that analyze data or incorporate programs within modern-day technology.	Unsure, if I had to choose, maybe a data scientist.
Student 16	I like law and watching interesting tv shows.	Corporate Lawyer	Corporate Lawyer
Student 17	Soccer and Tennis	NBA, NFL, MLB, MLL, MLS, Tennis, or Olympics	League of Legends Streamer
Student 18	N/A	Data analyst or Engineer	NASA
Student 19	studying biology	engineer, physicist, surgeon	Neurosurgeon
Student 20	Cooking, playing basketball, cycling	Doctor, Lawyer, Business Manager, Freelancer	Business Manager
Student 21	Basketball soccer	Software engineer data analyst	CEO of Apple
Student 22	fortnite, tennis,	Doctor/Psychiatrist	Doctor/Psychiatrist
Student 23	Video games	Automotive engineer	CEO of Tesla
Student 24	Talking with people	News Reporter, Youtuber	CEO of a University
Student 25	Computer science	Software engineer	Software engineer
Student 26	Coding, sports, news, watching streams.	Cybersecurity Analyst, Software Engineer	High level in a major corporation.

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Student 27	Hunting	Janitor	Janitor
Student 28	I rock climb in my free time.	Anesthesiologist	Heart Surgeon
Student 29	Software and tennis.	Software developer	ATP pro tennis player.

## **DISCUSSION**

Results from both the quantitative and qualitative data gathered shed light on the intricate relationship between high salary and passion in shaping the career aspirations of LHS students. Quantitatively, students showed a strong inclination towards prioritization and want for a higher salary aligning with the research conclusions developed by Pascual and Borgonovi. As a result, over 90% of students surveyed displayed that monetary incentives are huge influences in charting their career paths. Furthermore, the qualitative data provided a deeper understanding of how students make decisions, especially with regard to their inclination to give higher-paying professions preference over those that are in line with their hobbies and passions. The vast majority of students expressed occupations and dream jobs that had relatively no alignment with the passions they had. Additionally, a large percentage of students also discussed how they would prefer to engage in a job that is less personally fulfilling but offers a higher salary in comparison to an occupation that they truly enjoy and get intrinsic value from but pays a lower salary. Synthesizing these findings together, they align with the hypothesis that financial considerations often have more influence on students as opposed to passion when making career choices. Fulfilling the gap, suggesting that academically equipped and excelling students who are supported financially tend to incline towards careers that are monetarily fulfilling. Lastly, by offering empirical evidence to support the hypothesis, the findings justify the research process and advance the understanding of the variables affecting students' career goals.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **Reflection:**

Reflecting on the research process, on the relationship between salary and passion for high school students at LHS, I came to the realization that it was filled with a blend of successes, mistakes, and also surprises. One notable success was the successful implementation of sources in guiding the research process, which led to the development of the gap. By delving deeper into the existing literature and analyzing the construct of their research, methods, and literature

review, a study and focus on a specific area of research that previous works didn't mention was developed. An additional success experienced during the research process was the identification of an appropriate methodology which helped in gaining valuable qualitative and quantitative data. By appointing a survey and successfully implementing its uses into the data collection, I was able to gain valuable insight into the exploration of this relationship between the variables of salary and passion when discussing LHS student's future career motivations. However, a significant mistake encountered was the sample size. Even with extensive efforts to reach out to as many as possible, a sample size of 29 is not fully representative of the entire student body at LHS and therefore restricted the generalizability and the adaptability of this study to the greater population. What was surprising though, was the overwhelming number of students who heavily prioritized salary in their future careers. This was the initial expectation and hypothesis, but the extent to which students prefer a higher salary observed in the results was surprising.

**Implications:**

The results of this study can spur counselors to understand and implement certain programs to help students pursue and gain exposure to jobs that have a balance of both monetary benefits and intrinsic value to the student which would help to ensure the long-term well-being of students. This research could be used by counselors to design individualized plans that include things like job shadowing in industries related to the student's passions. This practical experience can play a critical role in assisting students in discovering which career paths, beyond financial gain, truly resonate with them on a deeper level. Furthermore, counselors can create tailored conferences to help students gain resources and opportunities to help them explore and align their passions with career paths, counselors can offer students internship opportunities with jobs that students seem to be interested in which could help them experiment with jobs that they find truly interesting and hopefully find a realization and mix between passion and salary.

**Limitations:**

While going through the research process, several limitations that were difficult to manage were encountered. An immediate and obvious limitation that came up was the idea of sample size. By conducting research on a relatively small sample size, compared to the large student population of LHS, the data and its analysis may not be an accurate representation of the school's thoughts on the research question. Along with this, having a small sample size decreases the generalizability and adaptability of the research to a more broad spectrum. I knowingly faced this limitation as when the research process first started, it was assumed that it would be hard to gain a significant sample size of the student body. Overcoming this limitation was not easy, it would be incredibly hard to get to every student at LHS and get them to go through the lengthy process of parental consent and then filling out the survey. To combat this I worked to the best of

my ability in order to make sure the survey was filled out by as many people as possible. Moving into the process of getting survey responses another limitation presented itself. When going through the survey responses received, the idea that the reliability of self-reported data was fluctuating was noticed. Several of the responses could be seen as not completely honest when regarding their motivations and passions. Additionally, people simply rushing through the survey and not giving it much thought proved to be a significant limitation as it led to struggles with data analysis and interpretation. For example, when asked about their passions, one response cited "making stuff" as a passion. This lack of specificity complicated the analysis process as troubles seeing if this could relate to the job aspirations they listed, emerged. Furthermore, some nuanced answers were received in the response to whether students would choose between a job they have passion for but receive low pay or a job they don't enjoy as much but get paid a high salary. In particular, responses indicating a willingness to prioritize passion over money up to a certain threshold blurred the distinction between preference for passionate careers versus financially rewarding ones. As a result, it was difficult to categorize and interpret some data. These problems arose because of the survey not being seen as important enough for proper consideration and thought by the respondents. To approach this limitation I asked people to fill out the survey with their best effort as it would greatly help the research project and it will only take utmost five to ten minutes out of their day.

### **Future Research:**

There are a few possible actions that could be taken in the future to expand on the research paper's findings. One approach is to collaborate with professionals like counselors, administrators, and certain researchers who specialize in the topics that this research paper aims to further explore. By doing so, they could provide valuable insights that could help strengthen the study. These professionals could offer feedback on the methodology, help interpret findings, and potentially assist with expanding the scope of the research. To confirm and build upon the initial findings, one approach is to implement qualitative research techniques like focus groups and interviews to shed more light on the goals and motives of students. By expanding the scope of data collection to in-person interviews, the study could gain a deeper and more nuanced understanding of students' underlying motivations. Although the survey offered valuable quantitative data, conducting interviews would allow the full exploration for the "why" behind students' priorities and decisions regarding salary versus passion. Speaking with students face-to-face may reveal significant details or viewpoints that the survey might have overlooked. Most importantly, securing a larger sample size moving forward would greatly benefit the research by increasing its generalizability and adaptability, while also ensuring that the findings would be generally more accurate to the student population at LHS. Additionally, this would bolster the statistical power of the analysis and allow for more robust and adaptable conclusions. By



pursuing these steps the study can build upon the foundational research established and strengthen the impact of the research towards the field of career planning for high school students.

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