SCHOOL

Career Guidance for School Students: A Field Study at Bhatān High School, Maharashtra

Mahek Nakade, Ayushi Trivedi, K. S. Aaditya, Bhojraj Y. Shewale

Amity Business School, Amity University Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

Published November 2026

Abstract

This research paper examines career awareness and guidance needs among school students from Classes 7 to 10 at Bhatān High School, Maharashtra. The field activity was conducted on 11 September 2026 by a three-member student team. The study aimed to understand students' career clarity, awareness of career options, influences on career choice, understanding of personal strengths, and previous exposure to career guidance. A field-based descriptive approach was used, combining classroom interaction, observation and a structured 10-question multiple-choice questionnaire. The questionnaire results reported for 30 students indicate that 50% did not have a clear career idea, 50% knew very little about different career options, and 83.3% had never received career guidance. Family was identified as the strongest influence on career choice by 50% of respondents, while 56.7% reported limited awareness of their strengths and skills. The team also observed that English-language comprehension was a barrier, so Hindi was used to improve communication. The study concludes that career guidance should be accessible, age-appropriate, interactive and provided regularly. The results are descriptive and limited to the participating students; no long-term follow-up was conducted.

Keywords: career awareness; career guidance; community outreach; school students; secondary education

1 Introduction

Career decisions are an important part of a student's educational journey. Students in Classes 7 to 10 begin to think about subjects, further education and possible occupations, but they may not yet know the range of career options or the qualifications required for different paths. Career guidance at this stage should support exploration rather than pressure students to make a final lifelong decision.

This study was conducted at Bhatān High School, Maharashtra, on 11 September 2026. The project team interacted with students from Classes 7 to 10 and explored their understanding of careers, interests, strengths, educational pathways and sources of influence. During the session, the team observed that many students were not comfortable discussing detailed information in English; Hindi was therefore used to make the interaction more accessible.

The study is relevant because students benefit from early exposure to a broad range of academic, vocational, creative, technical, business and service-oriented pathways. It also highlights the need to balance family guidance with students' own interests and abilities.

2 Problem statement

The study addresses the issue of limited career awareness among school students who are beginning to consider their future educational choices. Uncertainty about careers, limited knowledge of

available pathways, lack of prior guidance, family influence and language barriers may make it difficult for students to make informed decisions.

3 Objectives of the study

1. To assess students' clarity about their future career choices.
2. To examine students' awareness of different career options and educational pathways.
3. To identify the main factors influencing students' career choices.
4. To understand students' awareness of their own interests, strengths and skills.
5. To identify the need for accessible and regular career-guidance activities.

4 Research questions

1. How clearly have students identified a career they may wish to pursue?
2. How much do students know about different career options?
3. What factors and people influence students' career choices?
4. Have students received career guidance, and do they recognise their strengths and skills?

5 Literature review

The study is framed by the following themes.

- **Career awareness:** The outreach programme emphasised introducing students to a wider range of careers and explaining the education and skills associated with them.
- **Self-awareness:** The questionnaire addresses interests, hobbies, school subjects, strengths and skills as useful starting points for career exploration.
- **Family and social influence:** The questionnaire considers parents, teachers, friends and students themselves as possible influences on career choice.
- **Accessible communication:** The field observations indicate that language choice affects whether students can understand and participate in career-guidance discussions.
- **Continued guidance:** The programme recommends repeated sessions and follow-up activities instead of treating a single outreach session as sufficient.

6 Research methodology

6.1 Research design

The study used a field-based descriptive approach. It combined direct classroom interaction, observation and a structured questionnaire to explore career awareness among participating students.

6.2 Study location and target population

The field activity took place at Bhatān High School, Bhatān, Maharashtra. The target group consisted of students from Classes 7 to 10.

6.3 Sample size and sampling method

The questionnaire results cover 30 students. No formal probability-sampling method was used; the sample comprises the students who participated in the field activity, and it is not claimed to represent all school students.

6.4 Data sources and collection

Primary data comprised responses to a 10-question multiple-choice questionnaire, direct classroom interaction and field observations. Geo-tagged photographs were used as documentation of the activity. The session was conducted on 11 September 2026.

6.5 Data analysis

Questionnaire counts and percentages are reported. Interpretations are descriptive. The findings should be understood in relation to the 30 participating students and the limitations of a short field activity.

7 Data analysis and interpretation

The responses to the ten questionnaire items are given in Tables 1–10, and the responses to Questions 1–5 are also shown in Figures 1–5.

7.1 Question 1: Do you have a clear idea about the career you want to choose?

Table 1. Responses to Question 1 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Yes	10	33.3%
Somewhat	0	0.0%
No	15	50.0%
Not sure	5	16.7%

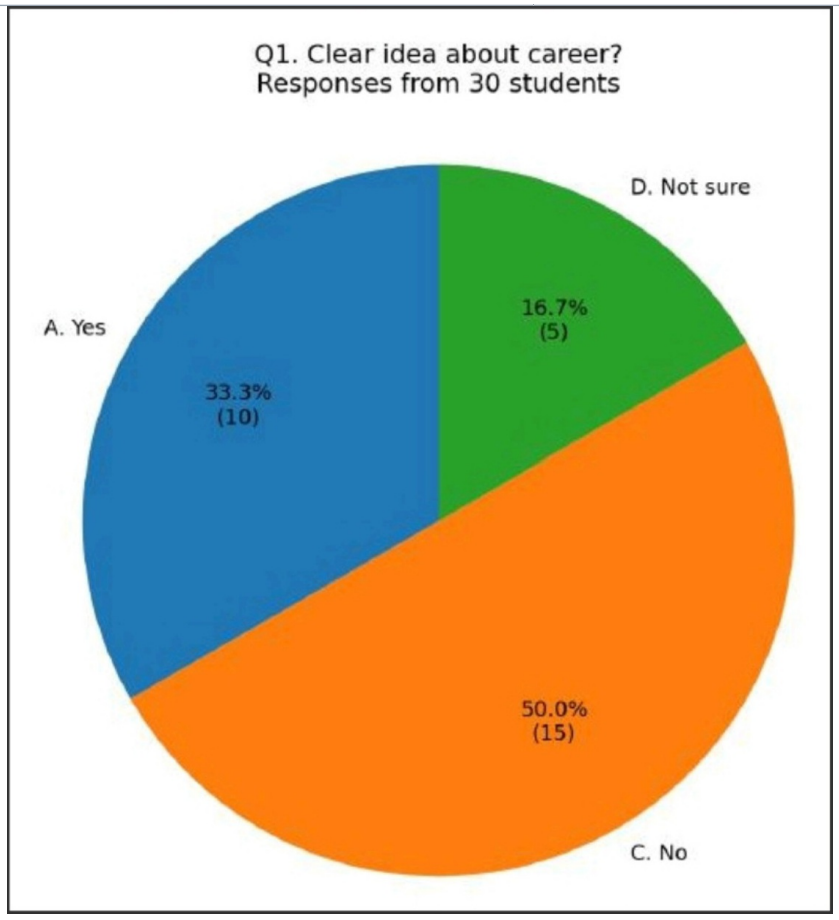


Figure 1. Responses to Question 1 (n = 30): Do you have a clear idea about the career you want to choose.

Interpretation: Half of the students (50%) reported that they did not have a clear career idea. One-third answered yes, while the remaining students were unsure. This supports the need for early career exploration.

7.2 Question 2: Which factor is most important when choosing a career?

Table 2. Responses to Question 2 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Interest	12	40.0%
Salary	3	10.0%
Family choice	13	43.3%
Friends' choice	2	6.7%

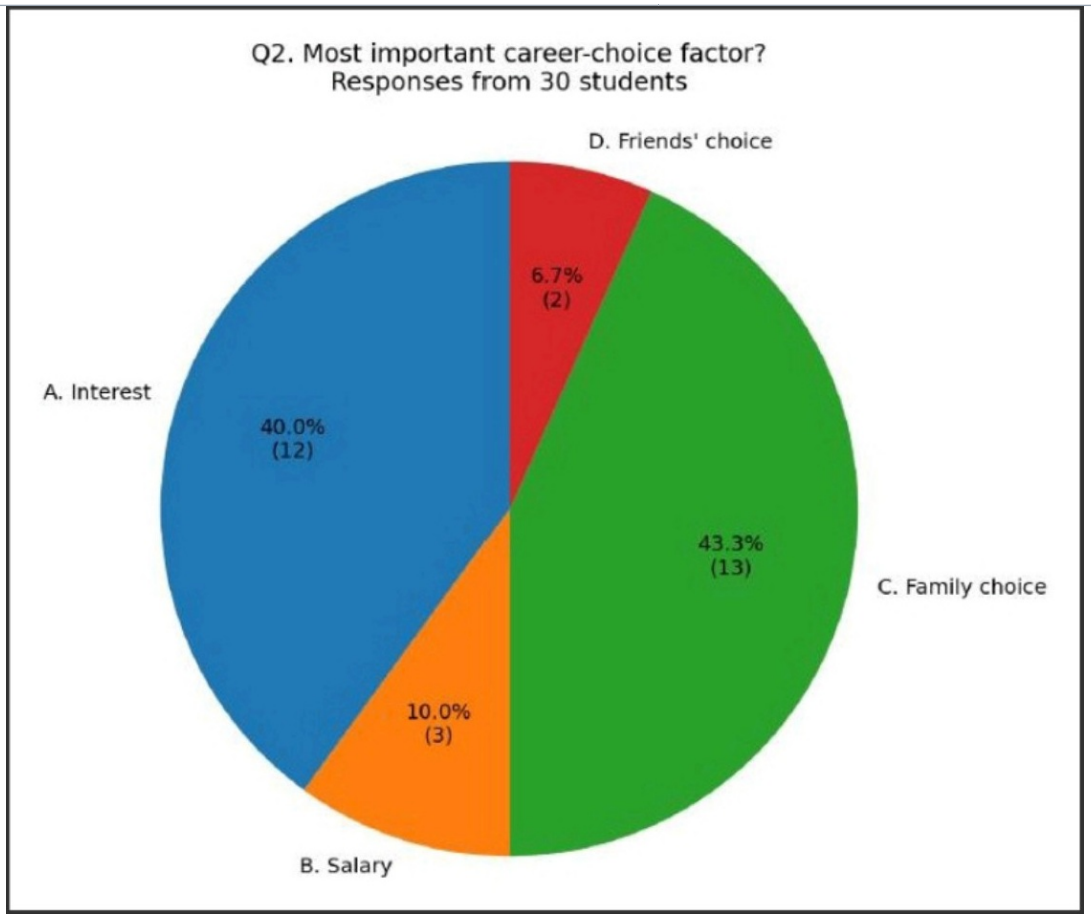


Figure 2. Responses to Question 2 (n = 30): Which factor is most important when choosing a career.

Interpretation: Family choice was selected by 43.3% and personal interest by 40%. The results suggest that family expectations and individual interests are both important considerations.

7.3 Question 3: Do you know about different career options?

Table 3. Responses to Question 3 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Very well	5	16.7%
Somewhat	6	20.0%
Very little	15	50.0%
Not at all	4	13.3%

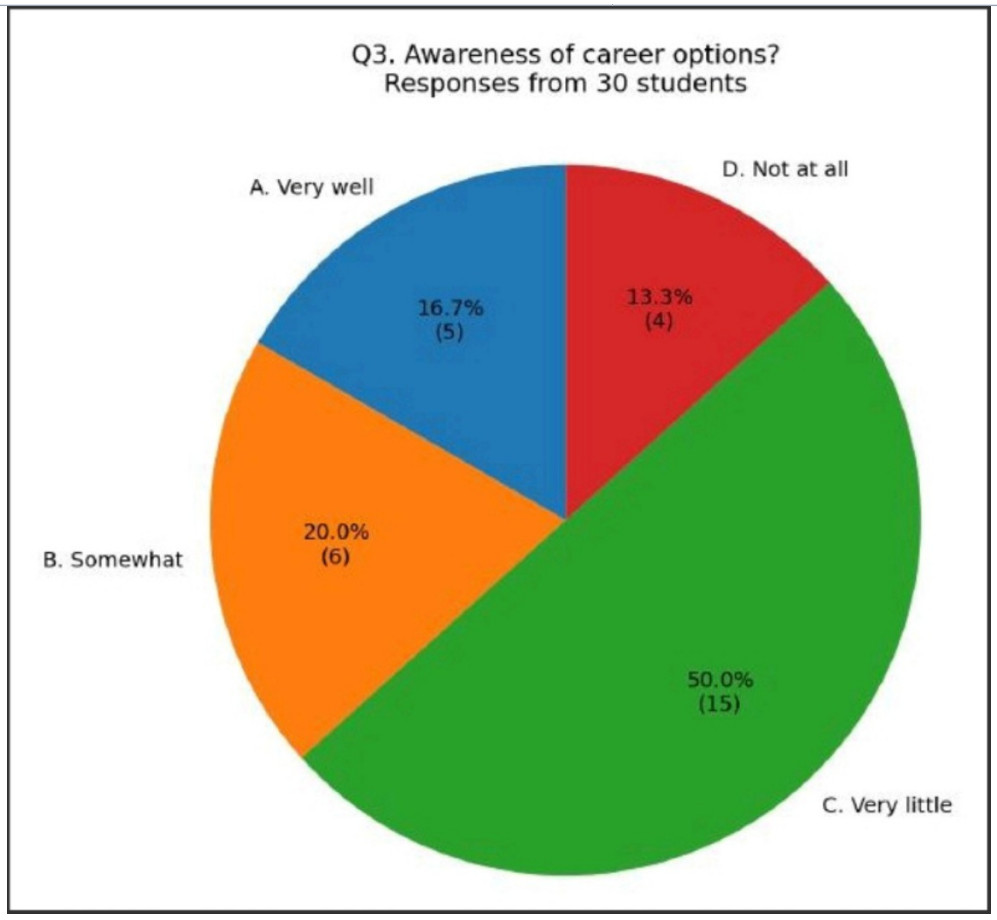


Figure 3. Responses to Question 3 (n = 30): Do you know about different career options.

Interpretation: Half of the respondents knew very little about career options, and 13.3% reported no awareness. The responses point to a need to introduce a broader range of careers.

7.4 Question 4: What type of career interests you most?

Table 4. Responses to Question 4 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Science/Technology	10	33.3%
Business/Commerce	8	26.7%
Arts/Humanities	5	16.7%
Sports/Creative fields	7	23.3%

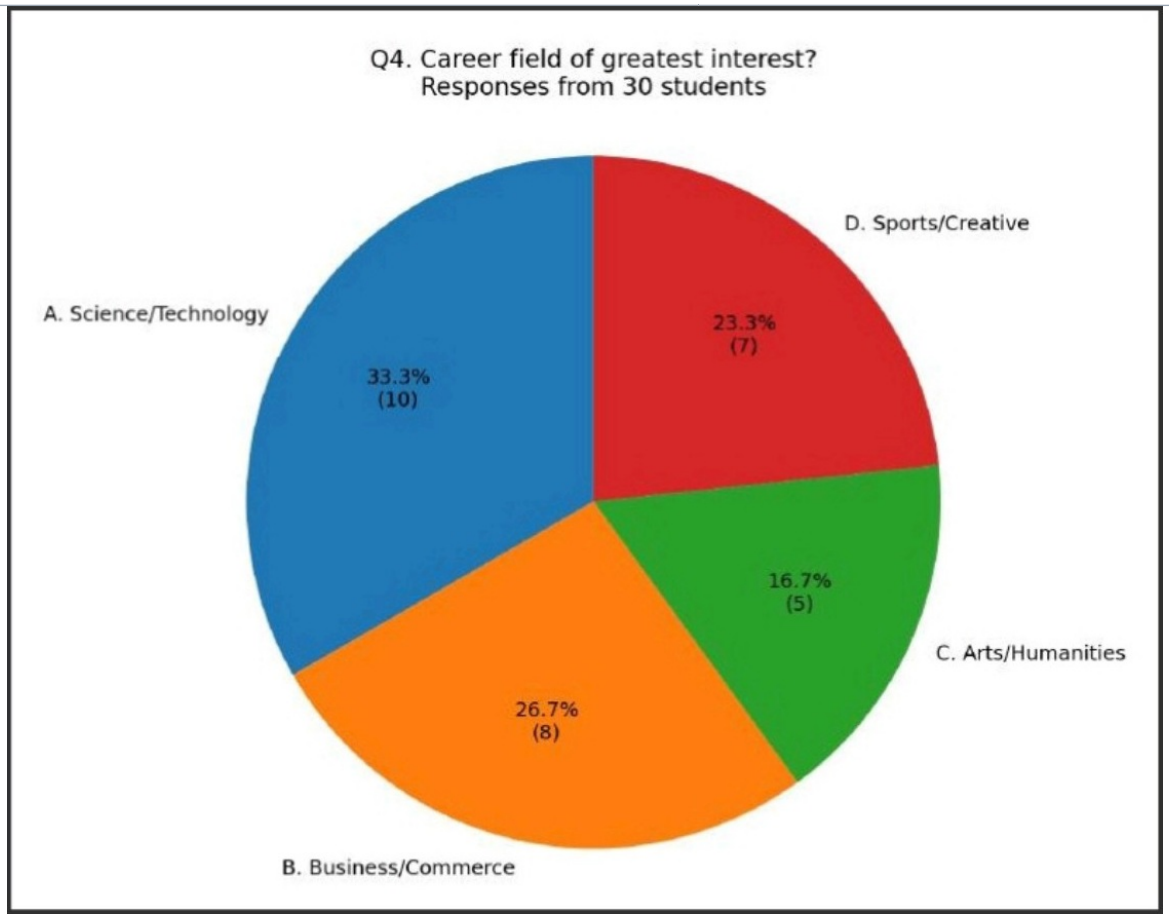


Figure 4. Responses to Question 4 (n = 30): What type of career interests you most.

Interpretation: Science/Technology was the most selected category, followed by Business/Commerce and Sports/Creative fields. The variety of responses supports presenting multiple career pathways.

7.5 Question 5: Have you received career guidance before?

Table 5. Responses to Question 5 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Yes, regularly	0	0.0%
Yes, once	0	0.0%
Very little	5	16.7%
Never	25	83.3%

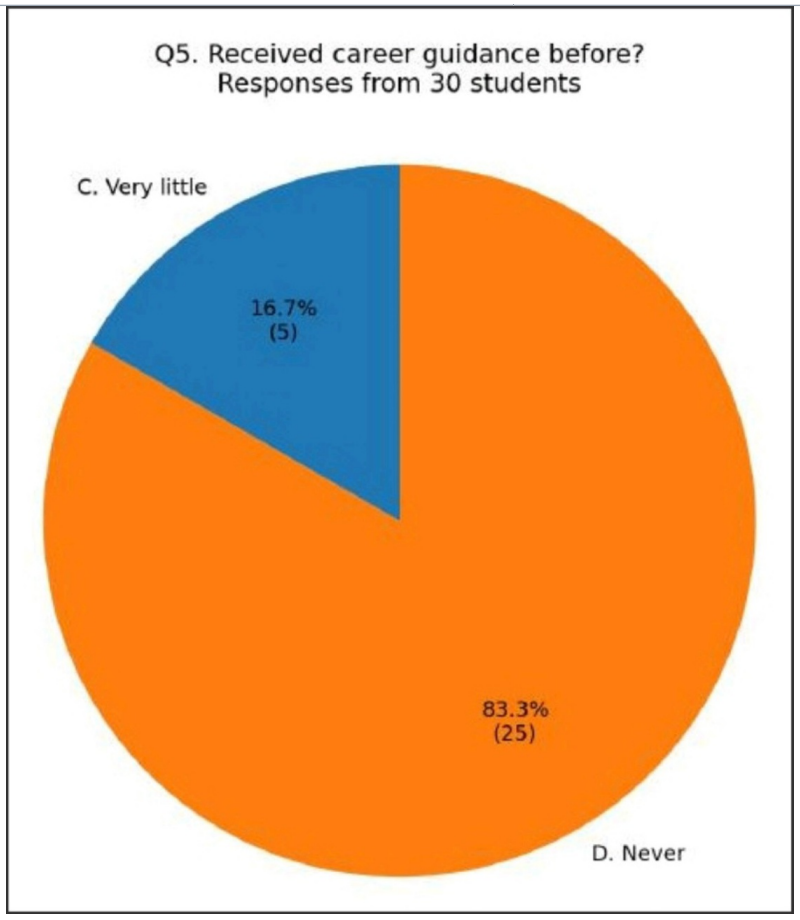


Figure 5. Responses to Question 5 (n = 30): Have you received career guidance before.

Interpretation: A large majority (83.3%) reported never receiving career guidance. This suggests that schools could make career information and guidance more accessible.

7.6 Question 6: Who influences your career choice the most?

Table 6. Responses to Question 6 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Parents/Family	15	50.0%
Teachers	6	20.0%
Friends	8	26.7%
Myself	1	3.3%

Interpretation: Parents or family were the most frequently selected influence, followed by friends and teachers. Guidance can help students reflect on their own interests while discussing family advice constructively.

7.7 Question 7: Do you know your strengths and skills?

Table 7. Responses to Question 7 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Yes	3	10.0%
To some extent	10	33.3%
Not much	17	56.7%
No	0	0.0%

Interpretation: More than half (56.7%) reported that they knew their strengths and skills only to a limited extent. Activities that build self-awareness may be useful.

7.8 Question 8: Which activity helps you understand your interests?

Table 8. Responses to Question 8 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Hobbies	8	26.7%
School subjects	18	60.0%
Projects/Activities	0	0.0%
All of these	4	13.3%

Interpretation: School subjects were the most commonly selected way of understanding interests. Guidance could also encourage reflection on hobbies and practical activities.

7.9 Question 9: How important is academic performance for your future career?

Table 9. Responses to Question 9 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Very important	20	66.7%
Important	8	26.7%
Somewhat important	0	0.0%
Not sure	2	6.7%

Interpretation: Most respondents considered academic performance important or very important. Career guidance can also explain the role of skills, qualifications and practical experience.

7.10 Question 10: Would you like to take a career aptitude/interest test?

Table 10. Responses to Question 10 (n = 30).

Response option	Students	Percentage
Yes	0	0.0%

Response option	Students	Percentage
Maybe	11	36.7%
No	17	56.7%
Already taken one	2	6.7%

Interpretation: More than half selected no, while over one-third selected maybe. Students may benefit from a simple explanation that assessments can support reflection but do not determine a career.

8 Findings

- 50% of the 30 respondents reported that they did not have a clear idea about their future career.
- 50% reported knowing very little about different career options; a further 13.3% reported no awareness.
- 83.3% stated that they had never received career guidance before.
- Family was the most frequently selected influence on career choice (50%); 43.3% selected family choice as the most important factor when choosing a career.
- 56.7% reported limited awareness of their own strengths and skills.
- Science/Technology was the most frequently selected career-interest category (33.3%), although responses covered several fields.
- The team observed that Hindi communication helped make the session more accessible to students who were not comfortable with English.

9 Suggestions and recommendations

- Conduct career-guidance sessions regularly instead of relying on a single activity.
- Use Hindi or bilingual materials where needed, alongside key English career terms.
- Introduce a broad range of academic, vocational, technical, creative, business and service-oriented careers.
- Help students reflect on interests, strengths and skills through classroom activities, hobbies and projects.
- Involve parents and teachers in discussions that balance family guidance with students' own interests.
- Explain the subjects, qualifications and practical skills associated with different pathways after Class 10.
- Offer individual guidance for students who need more detailed support.
- Conduct a follow-up survey to assess whether students' career awareness changes over time.

10 Conclusion

The field study at Bhatān High School indicates that career awareness and access to guidance were important needs among the 30 participating students. Half of the respondents lacked a clear career idea, half knew very little about available career options, and most had never received career guidance. Family influence and limited awareness of personal strengths were also notable themes.

The team adapted the session by using Hindi when English comprehension became a barrier. The study supports providing regular, accessible and age-appropriate guidance that helps students explore their interests and understand educational pathways without pressuring them to make an early permanent choice.

11 Limitations of the study

- The study involved 30 students at one school, so the results should not be generalised to all school students.
- The field activity was short and did not include a long-term follow-up.
- No formal sampling method was used.
- The study combines questionnaire results with qualitative observations; the observations are not a substitute for individual counselling.