Job Decision Factors: The considerations of recent graduates choosing their first jobs

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The Engineering Majors Survey (EMS) 2.0 was administered in 2016 to engineering students from 27 representative schools across the country as part of a longitudinal study to learn about engineering students’ interests and career goals surrounding innovation and entrepreneurship.

### Focal Survey Questions

**Q1:** Please describe your thought process in deciding which jobs to apply for.

**Q2:** What were the deciding factors for accepting the offer for your current position?

**Q3:** How did you select the job you are currently in? Please rank the following reasons from most (1) to least (8) important by clicking and dragging each item to create the desired order. 

- For future learning and growth
- To illustrate the differences
- As the most important factor in their decision. Those who did, saw themselves as more likely to do work that involves engineering in one year; but the differences five and ten years out were not significant.

### Prioritization of Job Decision Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>EMS Survey</th>
<th>Conscious Engineering</th>
<th>CAREER / PROFESSIONAL</th>
<th>INTERESTS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Job location</td>
<td>5.30</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.44</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working conditions</td>
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<td>2.56</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion opportunities</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only job available</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Debt Concerns Affecting Job Choice

- Low concern about paying off debt
- High concern about paying off debt

### Refining a Future Question

**Professional / Career Interests**
- Personal Growth and Long-term Goals
- Desired Field or Industry
- Day to Day Interest - Project and Job Specifics

**Future Research**

- How can we explain gender and race/ethnicity differences in the variables that determine “good job characteristics” as a reason for job selection?
- Are students more concerned about debt because of a single job offer? Or are they calling off job searches due to financial pressure?
- What can we learn about motivations from the qualitative data that would complement the findings of the quantitative?

### The Qualitative Difference

- What is the relationship between job selection factors, concerns of debt, plans to work in engineering, and demographic characteristics? How do these variables interact and complicate the story? Are there more students who have different interests compared to the quantitative data?