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Career Indecision Among Secondary School Students: Influence Of Career Beliefs

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Abstract

Career beliefs seem to set the stage upon which career indecision occurs. The negative career beliefs may act as an obstacle, thwart students from grabbing life chances, taking charge of their lives, and elevating their financial and social position (Arulmani, Laar & Easton, 2003). Keeping this in view the current study will investigate the influence career beliefs on the career indecision of secondary school students studying in government, government aided and private schools. The study included 720 secondary school students (360 boys and 360 girls). Career beliefs was measured using Career Beliefs Pattern Scale Version 3 by Arulmani (2012) and for measuring career indecision of secondary school status, the career decision making inventory by Singh (1999) was employed. The results revealed that boys and girl both are unable to choose a relevant career for themselves. Boys are having more negative career thoughts related to the process of career preparation. The students studying in government schools are not able to decide a relevant career and face obstacles during the process of career choice and also have high negative career beliefs as compared to students studying in private and aided schools. Career indecision and career beliefs are significantly correlated and career beliefs significantly contributing towards career indecision of secondary school students.

Key words: Career Indecision, Career Beliefs and Secondary School Students

Introduction

Career beliefs can impact the career aspirants in both negative and positive manner. Negative career beliefs influences the perception of the students towards the job market and themselves, it surge the level of negative feelings related with the process of choosing a career and also immobilize their actions towards their career goals (Sampson, 1996). Negative beliefs can affect the student's measures at any stage of career counseling (Amundson, 1997). Students who encountered negative feelings during the process of choosing a career may identify themselves as unable to deal with with stress (Sampson, 1996). Actions towards career goals are

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impeded by the feeling of anxiety about the career choice (O'hare, 1989; Sampson, 1996). On the other hand, positive career beliefs smoothen the process of career choice, generate positive expectations, and enhance the problem solving behavior (Peterson, Sampson, Reardon, & Lenz, 1996). Students with positive beliefs are aware about their potentials, skills, values and interests. Furthermore, these students have realistic career goals and actively involved in career related actions.

Career indecision is defined as the indecision with regards choice (Osipow, Carney, Winer, Yanico & Koschier, 1976). "Chartrand, Martin, Robbins, McAuliffe, Pickering, and Calliotte (1994) defined career indecision as a developmental problem within the career maturation process that results from a lack of information about self or the world of work". Career Indecision is extensively used with reference to obstacles associated to career development, mainly obstacles relates to the career decision making (Fouad, 1994). Career indecision from the point of view of university students is defined as "the inability to select a university major or occupation (Borgen & Hiebert, 2006, p. 58)".). "Career indecision is regarded as a complex, multidimensional construct represented by different forms of indecision (Reenen, 2010)". Career indecision is a common response of students when they are required to take decisions related to their career choice and goals. It may occur any time but mostly it likely to happen at career transition points, like when students has to choose school subjects or university programs or deciding about part-time job (Patton & Creed, 2001). Callahan & Greenhaus (1992) differentiate among various subtypes of career indecision. Developmental indecision is caused by paucity of general information regarding the process of choosing a career and prospects of various careers. Greenhaus, Callahan and Kaplan (1995) chronic indecision is a everlasting incapability to set a career goal. Career indecision were positively associated with anxiety (Corkin, Arbona, Coleman & Ramirez, 2008; Mojgan, Kadir & Soheil, 2011; Peng, Johanson & Chang, 2012); parental attachment was not a predictor of career indecision (Kang, 2009); neuroticism, career locus of control and academic self-esteem are the predictors of career indecision (Starica, 2012); career indecision and dysfunctional career thoughts were associated with symptoms of depression, with confusion regarding the career decision making is being the best predictor (Walker & Peterson, 2012); there is no difference between work experience, gender and academic achievement in career intervention programs for students with career

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indecision (Mansor & Rashid, 2013); in adolescents career decision making process emotional intelligence, decision making self-efficacy and parenting styles plays a significant role (Parishani & Nilforooshan, 2014). Graduated individuals are able to select a relevant career as compared to undergraduate students. The students who were decided about their career are tended to be older and more individuated (Kinner, 2018).

"Thoughts, ideas, attitudes, assumptions, beliefs and / or cognitions about the world of work and activities related to career preparation and career development are referred to as career beliefs (Krumboltz, 1994)". "Career beliefs are defined as positive and negative thoughts or assumptions people hold about themselves, occupations, and the career development process (Peterson, Sampson, Reardon, & Lenz, 1996)". "Career beliefs are conglomerate of attitudes, opinions, convictions that seem to cohere together to create mind-sets that underlie people's orientation to the idea of a career (Arulmani& Nag-Arulmani, 2004)". Attributional retraining exhibited significant changes in career beliefs (Luzzo, James and Luna, 1996); career beliefs of career program participants at-risk of dropping out of school had statistically significant relationships with the career maturity (Schnorr,1998); low relationship was found between career beliefs of Indians and acculturation levels (Mahadevan, 2002); career beliefs are negatively related with career resilience (Liu 2003); 12% of variance in vocational maturity is accounted to irrational career beliefs (Ozkamali, Cesuroglu, Hamamci, Buga, & Cekic, 2014). Students who are decided are having positive career beliefs and have strong faith in their potentials to conquer the difficulties (Lunney's, 1993); negative career beliefs delayed the career exploration behavior (Mitchell's, 1993); disability and negative career beliefs conjointly contributes towards the career indecision (Enright, 1994); Students with more confidence had more adaptive career beliefs (Luzzo, 1996); career beliefs seem to set the stage upon which career indecision occurs (Arulmani, Laar & Easton, 2003).

Purpose o the study

The cardinal objective of the current study is to explore the influence of career beliefs on the career indecision among the secondary school students.

Methodology

Descriptive survey method was employed for the current study. The data was collected from 720 secondary school students studying in public, private and government aided schools of

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Jalandhar district of Punjab. For choosing the sample form the population simple random sampling was employed.

Instruments

Career beliefs was measured using Career Beliefs Pattern Scale Version 3 by Arulmani (2012) and for measuring career indecision of secondary school students, career decision making inventory by Singh (1999) was employed.

Results and discussion

Descriptive analysis

The mean, S.D., Sk and Ku of the variables under study i.e. career beliefs, and career indecision has been given in table 1

Table 1: A summary of descriptive statistics of career indecision and career beliefs

Variables	Mean	S.D.	Sk	Ku	Remarks
Career Indecision	**24.31**	**5.33**	**-0.01**	**-0.533**	Above Average
Career Beliefs	**126.64**	**31.30**	**0.11**	**0.014**	High Average -vty

Note: The higher the score the greater is the negativity of career beliefs

Table 1 shows that the mean and S.D. of career indecision was 24.31 and 5.33 respectively. An above average score of career indecision reflect that secondary school students are indecisive. They are more uncertain in making relevant career decision and sticking to a particular career. Sk is -0.01 which is negative and shows that the data is negatively skewed. Ku is -0.533 which is greater than 0.263 ku for normal curve and reveals that the curve is platykurtic.

Furthermore, it is lucid from table 1that the value of mean and S.D. of career beliefs were 126.64 and 31.30 respectively. High scores indicate higher negativity in the content of career beliefs. It means that the secondary school students had high average negative career beliefs. This demonstrates that the senior secondary school students have high average negative thoughts about career preparations and career development. Sk is found to be 0.11 which is positive and reveals that the data is positively skewed. Ku is 0.014 which is lesser that 0.263 ku for normal curve and shows that the curve is leptokurtic.

Differential Analysis

Table 2: **Comparison of boys and girls on career indecision and career beliefs**

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Variables	Boys			Girls			t-ratio
	Mean	S.D.	SE_M	Mean	S.D.	SE_M	
Career Indecision	24.45	5.355	.282	24.16	5.298	.279	**.742**
Career Beliefs	134.63	30.41	1.603	118.66	30.151	1.589	**7.07****

*** Significant at 0.01 level (2.58)*

Table 2 indicates that no significant difference was found between male and female students on their career indecision (.742). Also the mean value for boys was 24.45 and mean value for girls was 24.16 and the difference between both mean values are negligible. Boys and girls were almost at par in their inability to make a relevant career decision.

Furthermore, table 2 reveals that a significant difference was found between male and female students (t-ratio= 7.07) at 0.01 level. Also the mean scores of boys (134.63) were higher than mean scores of girls (118.66). It revealed that the boys had more negative career beliefs as compared to their counterparts. It suggested that boys have negative beliefs about their career preparations and career development as compared to girls.

Analysis Of Variance (One Way ANOVA) for type of institution

Table 3 Comparison of government, government aided and private schools students of career indecision and career beliefs

Variables	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F
Career Indecision	Between Groups	1618.286	2	809.14	30.91**
	Within Groups	18768.49	717	26.17	
	Total	20386.78	719		
Career Beliefs	Between Groups	76409.69	2	38204.84	43.63**
	Within Groups	627829.3	717	875.63	
	Total	704239	719		

*** Significant at 0.01 level*

Table 3 indicates that F value of career indecision is 30.91 which is significant at 0.01 level. This demonstrates that a significant difference was observed in the career indecision among students studying in different types of school i.e. private, public and government schools.

It is lucid from the table 3 when public, government aided and private schools were compared on career beliefs, the F-ratio was found to be 43.63, significant at 0.01 level of

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confidence. This showed that the students studying the different types of schools private, government and government schools vary in their thoughts about career preparations and career development.

t-test for type of school

't'-test was employed to find out the significant difference between two groups at one time (difference between government aided and public schools, difference between public and private aided schools, difference between private and government aided schools) on career indecision and career beliefs as the calculated F-ratio was significant.

Table 4: Comparison of government aided and government schools of career indecision and career beliefs

Variables	Government Aided			Government			t-ratio
	Mean	S.D.	SE_M	Mean	S.D.	SE_M	
Career Indecision	24.25	5.33	0.34	26.17	4.74	0.31	**4.18****
Career Beliefs	121.88	27.61	1.78	140.95	30.40	1.96	**7.20****

***Significant at 0.01 level*

Table 4 depicts that a significant difference was observed between government aided and public school students on career indecision (4.18). Also the mean value for government aided school students was 24.25 and mean value for government school students was 26.17. This demonstrates that students studying in government schools are facing more problems during the career decision making process. Government school students are not able to select a relevant career as compared to the students studying in government aided schools.

It is evident from table 4 that a significant difference was observed between government aided and public school students (t-ratio= 7.20) at 0.01 level. Also the mean scores of public school students (140.95) were higher than mean scores of government aided school students (121.88). It revealed that the public school students had more negative beliefs about their career preparations and career development than government aided school students.

Table 5: Comparison of government and private schools of career indecision and career beliefs

Variables	Government			Private			t-ratio
	'Mean	S.D.	SE_M	Mean	S.D.	$SE_{M'}$	
Career Indecision	26.17	4.74	0.31	22.50	5.26	0.34	**8.03****

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Career Beliefs	140.95	30.40	1.96	117.10	30.67	1.98	**8.56****

***Significant at 0.01 level*

Table 5 reveals that a significant difference was observed between public and private school students on career indecision (t-ratio= 8.03). It suggests that students studying in private and government school differ significantly on their inability to choose a relevant career. Furthermore, the mean value for private school students was 22.50 and mean value for government school students was 26.17. It means that students studying in government schools are more undecided about their career as compared to students studying in private schools.

A look at the above table reflects that a significant difference was observed between public and private school students (t-ratio= 8.56) at 0.01 level on career beliefs. The mean scores of public school students (140.95) were higher than mean scores of private school students (117.10). It revealed that the government school students had more negative beliefs about their career preparations than private school students.

Table 6: Comparison of private and government aided schools of career indecision and career beliefs

Variables	Government Aided			Private			t-ratio
	Mean	S.D.	SE_M	Mean	S.D.	SE_M	
Career Indecision	24.25	5.33	0.34	22.50	5.26	0.34	**3.61****
Career Beliefs	121.88	27.61	1.78	117.10	30.67	1.98	**1.79**

Table 6 depicts that a significant difference was observed between government aided and private school students on career indecision (t-3.61). The mean value for government aided school students was 24.25 and mean value for private school students was 22.50. This demonstrates that students studying in government aided schools are facing more problems during the career decision making process. Government aided school students are not able to select a relevant career as compared to the students studying in government aided schools.

A glance at above table indicates that no significant difference was found on career beliefs among the students studying in government aided and private schools (t-ratio= 1.79). It reveals that students studying in government aided and private school are having similar level of negative beliefs about their career preparations and career development.

Correlation analysis

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The analysis of correlation matrix of career indecision with career belief has been given in table 7

Table 7: Correlation matrix of career indecision with career beliefs

Variable	**Career Indecision.**	**Career Beliefs**
Career Indecision.	1	
Career Beliefs	0.333**	1

***Significant at the 0.01 Level*

Table 7 reflects that a significant and positive relationship was found between career indecision and career beliefs (0.333) at 0.01 level. It shows that there exists a significant relationship between career indecision and career beliefs. The result shows that as negative thoughts about career preparations and career development increase among secondary school students their inability to select and commit to career also increases, and vice versa. The findings are supported by Arulmani, Laar and Easton (2003) who suggested that career beliefs seem to set the stage upon which career indecision occurs. Data from the study suggests that negative career beliefs may act as an obstacle, thwart students from grabbing life chances, taking charge of their lives, and elevating their financial and social position.

Regression Analysis

Table 8 Model summary table

Model Summary				
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.328[a]	.107	.106	5.03
a. Predictors: (Constant), Career Beliefs b. Dependent Variable: Career Indecision				

From the model summary table 8, the value of regression coefficient R square was found to be .107, which means that 10.7% of variability in career indecision is explained by career beliefs.

Table 9 ANOVA summary table

Model		**Sum of squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
1.	Regression	2191.37	1	2191.37	86.47	.000[b]
	Residual	18195.40	718	25.34		
	Total	20386.78	719			

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a. Predictors: (Constant), Career Beliefs
b. Dependent Variable: Career Indecision

The ANOVA table above tells whether the R value of .328 is statistically significant or not. It is clear from the ANOVA table that the regression model is statistically significant (F = 86.47) with p value = 0.000 which indicated that overall, the model applied is statistically and significant and can predict the dependent variable (Career Indecision).

Table 10 Coefficients table

Model		**Unstandardized Coefficients**		**Standardized Coefficients**		
		B	**Std.Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**
1	**(Constant)**	17.241	.783		22.032	.000
	Career Beliefs	.056	.006	.328	9.299	.000

Table 10 shows the regression coefficients which represent the mean change in response variable (IDV) for one unit change in predictor variable. The std. β value (.328) indicates the correlation between career indecision and career beliefs which is found to be significant (p =.000).This indicates that career indecision score would increase by .056 for every unit increase in career beliefs (i.e. one unit increase in career beliefs will lead to .056 increase in career indecision). Further, the unstandardized coefficient β value indicates that career beliefs is making a statistically significant and unique contribution towards predicting career indecision outcome variable, (p = .000, less than 0.05 and 0.01).

The regression equation for relation between career indecision and career beliefs of students can be written as; career indecision (Y) = 17.241 + (.056) × career beliefs (X).

Thus, there is enough evidence that the slope of population regression line is not zero at 0.01 level of confidence, hence career beliefs is a considerable predictor of career indecision of secondary school students.

Conclusion

The study documents the following conclusions:

1. Boys and girls secondary school students do no differ significantly with respect to career indecision. Both the genders are having similar level of career indecision.

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2. Boys and girls secondary school students differ significantly with respect to career beliefs. Boys studying in secondary school students are having more negative thoughts about their career preparation as compared to girls.
3. Students studying in government schools are more undecided towards their career choice and have high negative career beliefs in comparison to the students studying in government aided and private schools.
4. A positive and significant correlation was found between career indecision and career beliefs. As the negative career beliefs surges among secondary school students their career indecision also increases.
5. Career beliefs significant contributing towards the career indecision of secondary school students.

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