



# AN ANALYSIS OF CAREER MATURITY AMONG HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PUDUCHERRY AND STARTERGIIES TO FOSTER AWARENESS ON CAREER MATURITY

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## Abstract

Career maturity is the level of awareness over various careers, desired attitude towards careers or work and competence in career understanding. It plays a crucial role in the vocational life individuals. Choosing the right career according to the skills set and aptitude of the students is very vital for career advancement. This study is a survey and experimental based study aims to find out the level of career maturity among higher secondary student in Puducherry and developing an interventional career awareness program for the students to foster career maturity among students. A sample of 320 higher secondary students is surveyed for their career maturity and 40 students were employed in pre-test post-test single group experimental design with and two session interventional program on career awareness.

Findings of this study reveals that level of career maturity among higher secondary student is average with need for creating awareness. Gender, year of study and type of school have influence over career maturity and stream of study doesn't influence over career maturity among higher secondary students. Pre- test post-test interventional design indicate that their increase in awareness about various careers and its nature after the students exposed to two hours session. This study concludes that there is need for career awareness programs in higher secondary schools in Puducherry as the level of career maturity is average. Strategies to develop career maturity among higher secondary students is discussed.

**Key words:** Career maturity, higher secondary school students, career maturity fostering strategies

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of Career Maturity has its origin in the Super's developmental theory of career behaviour, which envisages that selection of an occupation is a process spanning a considerable number of years usually from late childhood to early adulthood. (A Singh & Sahiba, 2020). Career maturity refers to the readiness and ability of individuals, particularly students, to make informed and realistic career decisions. It is a critical aspect of career development and includes the attitudes, knowledge, and skills needed to navigate career-related challenges effectively. Among school students, career maturity is influenced by various factors, including their age, grade level, exposure to career guidance, and personal experiences.

### Importance of Career Maturity

Stress associated with uncertainty about the future. Clear goals often motivate students to perform better academically. Minimizes stress associated with uncertainty about the future. Clear goals often motivate students to perform better academically. Prepares students to navigate career transitions and challenges effectively. Taking career decision whether educational or vocational is usually dependent on the knowledge of themselves and of world of work, their ability to make decisions, and a positive attitude and competency towards making wise career decisions. (S.kalita, 2020).

### Components of Career Maturity in School Students

1. **Self-awareness:** Understanding one's interests, values, strengths, and weaknesses.
2. **Decision-making skills:** Ability to weigh options, consider consequences, and make sound career choices.
3. **Goal-setting:** Clarity about future aspirations and the steps required to achieve them.
4. **Exploration:** Willingness to learn about various careers, industries, and educational pathways.
5. **Attitudes toward work:** Positive and realistic perceptions about career opportunities and challenges.
6. **Adaptability:** Flexibility to adjust plans based on changing circumstances or new information.

### Factors Influencing Career Maturity

1. **Age and Cognitive Development:** Older students, especially those nearing graduation, often demonstrate greater career maturity due to increased exposure to career-related experiences.
2. **Parental Influence:** Parents play a significant role in shaping attitudes, expectations, and aspirations.
3. **Educational Interventions:** Career guidance programs, workshops, and counselling can significantly enhance career maturity.
4. **Peer Influence:** Discussions and shared experiences with peers can impact students' career attitudes and decisions.

5. **Cultural and Societal Expectations:** Socioeconomic background, cultural norms, and societal trends influence career aspirations and readiness.
6. **Access to Resources:** Availability of career-related information, mentorship, and opportunities for internships or work exposure.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following are the objectives of the study

1. To find the level of career maturity among higher secondary school students in Puducherry
2. To find the effect of the background variables viz: gender, year of study, type of school and stream of study on career maturity among higher secondary school students in Puducherry.
3. To conduct an intervention to enhance career maturity among higher secondary school students.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Indian studies

Several studies have been conducted related to career maturity with sample of adolescents (A. Sharma, 2024), higher secondary students (S. Kalita, 2000), (R. Ramya, 2022), (S.Das, 2023), (H.Kaur, 2021). All these studies focus on having Career maturity as main variable and using academic achievement, self-esteem, school climate as independent variables.

### Abroad studies

Studies in abroad focuses on career maturity among college students (T T H .Vo, 2022) factors of career development, (S. Alimova, Et.Al., 2024), career development program. (H J Yoon, Et. Al., 2024), career proactivity (Z Jiang Et.al., 2022).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

**Population:** Higher secondary students in Puducherry comprise of the population

**Sample:** 320 higher secondary students in Puducherry forms the sample of present study.

### Tools used

#### a) Career maturity inventory (by Dr. Nirmala Gupta)

This tool was developed based on (Super, 1957) and it is divided into assessment of attitude and competencies related to career.

#### b) Pre-test to assess awareness of various careers

Researcher prepared as 10 item test to identify the awareness about various careers.

#### c) Post-test to assess awareness of various careers

Researcher prepared as 10 item test to identify the awareness about various careers which is used exclusively in this study.

## PHASES OF STUDY

Study is conducted in the following phases:

### Phase – 1 normative survey

A normative survey was conducted using the tool career maturity inventory form 320 higher secondary students from 4 schools in Puducherry. Prior to Actual study a pilot study was conducted with 40 students and with test –rest reliability for 2 week gap yielding .84 considering the tool to be reliable for the present sample.

### Phase – II Single group Pre- test post –test experiment

A single group pre- test and post-test experiment was conducted. The intervention was two sessions of career guidance program conducted to a sample 40 higher secondary students.

## ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

### a) Analysis on the level of career maturity among higher secondary students

**Table 1 showing the level of career maturity among higher secondary school students in Puducherry**

Variable	Sample	N	Mean	S.D	Results	Maximum score: 120
Career Maturity	Higher secondary students in Puducherry	320	48.2	15.5	Average	

From table 1, it is evident that the computed Mean value was found to be 48.2 and hence the higher secondary students in Puducherry have average level of career maturity.

**Table 2 showing the level of categories of career maturity among higher secondary school students in Puducherry**

Variable	Sample	N	Mean	S.D	Results	Maximum score
Attitude for Career Maturity	Higher secondary students in Puducherry	320	22.4	16.8	Average	50
Competence for Career Maturity		320	26.8	24	Below average	70

From table 2, it is evident that the computed Mean value for attitude for career maturity was found to be 22.4 and hence the higher secondary students in Puducherry have average level of attitude for career maturity. Further it is found that, Mean value for competence for career maturity was found to be 26.8 and hence the higher secondary students in Puducherry have below average level of attitude for career maturity.

### B) Analysis on the impact of background variables on career maturity among higher secondary students

**Table 3 showing the t – value with respect to the background variables over career maturity**

Personal variables	Category	N	%	Career Maturity		t- value	Results
				Mean	S.D		
Gender	Boys	167	53.4	49.25	15.8	14.75	Significant at 0.01
	Girls	153	45.90	42.56	15.9		
Year of study	1 <sup>st</sup> year	151	45.30	40.36	14.8	17.93	Significant at 0.01
	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	169	50.70	48.25	15.8		
Type of school	Government	155	46.50	38.25	15.2	18.58	Significant at 0.01
	Private	165	49.50	46.24	14.2		
Stream of study	Maths and Biology	155	46.50	49.52	15.8	1.823	Not Significant at 0.01
	Computer science	165	49.50	48.56	15.6		

From table 3 , it is found that there significant mean difference between boys and girls with boys having mean compared to girls in their career maturity. Higher secondary second year students have higher mean compared to first year students in their mean and private students have higher career maturity than government students. Maths and biology and Computer science students doesn't differ in their mean leading to stream of study having no influence over career maturity among higher secondary students.

**Table 4 showing the Pre- test post –test experimental design's t test**

Variable	Test	N	Mean	S.D	T –value	Results
Career Awareness	Pre- test	40	7.2	5.1	12.8	Significant at 0.01
	Post- test	40	9.2	4.8		

From table 4 , it is found at that there is significant mean difference in the pre-test and post- test scores among higher secondary students indicating that the Post test scores are higher compared to the pre-

test and thereby there is increase of awareness of careers after students exposed to the two session interventional program on awareness of various careers.

## FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Following are the findings of the study:

1. Career maturity among higher secondary students in Puducherry is average.
2. Attitude for Career Maturity is average among higher secondary students in Puducherry.
3. Competence for career maturity is low among higher secondary students in Puducherry.
4. Boys have more career maturity than girls
5. Higher secondary 2nd year students have more career maturity than 1<sup>st</sup> year students.
6. Private school students have more career maturity than government school students.
7. Stream of study doesn't have impact on career maturity among higher secondary school students.

## EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

Following are the educational implications of the study

1. Creation of awareness about various careers and its nature is essential in school at higher secondary school level.
2. Career guidance program must be organized at the end of higher secondary 2nd year examination.
3. Career shows, talks of career must be frequently conducted
4. Students must be oriented towards importance of vocational life.
5. Students can be made for industrial visits during field trips to make them understand the importance of various jobs.
6. Vocational guidance and counselling must be made functional and effectively operational in schools at the higher secondary schools.
7. Students can be allowed to visit various job fairs which are conducted at the college level.
8. Successful alumni of the school must be invited to give awareness about career paths.

## Strategies to Enhance Career Maturity

1. **Career Counselling:** Personalized guidance helps students align their aspirations with their skills and opportunities.
2. **Career Education:** Incorporating career-related subjects and activities into the school curriculum.
3. **Mentorship Programs:** Connecting students with professionals who can provide insights and inspiration.
4. **Self-assessment Tools:** Using aptitude tests, interest inventories, and personality assessments to foster self-awareness.

5. **Parental Engagement:** Encouraging parents to support and guide their children's career exploration process.
6. **Exposure to Real-world Experiences:** Organizing internships, job shadowing, and field trips. By fostering career maturity, schools can empower students to make confident and informed career decisions, setting the stage for lifelong success.

## CONCLUSIONS

Thus our country can become productive by making school students to be aware of various careers and creating career maturity and awareness among the students through various program in the school.

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