



IMPACT OF GENDER AND STUDY HOURS ON CAREER AUTONOMY AND CAREER INDECISION OF STUDENTS

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Abstract: The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between career developmental constructs, to examine the gender difference and impact of study hours on career autonomy and career indecision of students. The sample (N=230) was selected randomly from different schools and colleges of Uttar Pradesh, India. The data was analyzed using SPSS version 20.0. The results of correlation yielded a significant negative relationship between career autonomy and career indecision. The t-test results obtained showed no gender differences among the variables under study and one-way ANOVA yielded significant effect of study hours on career indecision of students. It is conclude that more the students engage themselves in study, less indecisive they will become regarding career choice.

Keywords: Career Autonomy, Career Indecision, Adolescent Students, Gender, Study Hours

I. INTRODUCTION

Career exploration is a vital and significant process in a student life. As students reach at the secondary level of education, it becomes inevitable for them to decide a career whether on their own or with the help of others. In India, the literacy rate is exponentially growing for many years (Census, 2011) and the need for education is increasing day by day as parents are concerned about educating their children to the fullest. The period of adolescence is very crucial and very vulnerable stage of an individual's life. Majority of changes, whether psychological or physiological, takes place during this stage and students need to concentrate on many facets of life simultaneously. One of the aspects is to devote few hours on their studies to choose an appropriate career in order to be successful in challenging life ahead. The need for education and its importance is getting more awareness among the members of our society. Hence, it is required to process these young minds effectively to avoid any psychological distress that may lead to several problems to each individual and their families in the

future. Apart from emotional, social and psychological needs of adolescent students, spending time on educational need is also important for their overall personality development. Past researches have shown that the learning needs of students can be improved by positive relationships so that they better understand the circumstances and are able to make appropriate choices during learning at school and also at home (McCombs, 2010).

Behaviours related to career autonomy can be enhanced by the teachers' support and maintaining a healthy relationship with the students to be motivated for studying and coping with the difficulties faced during decision making process. Guay (2005) explained 'perceived autonomy' in terms of motivational processes (Ryan & Connell, 1989). Deci and Ryan (1985) elucidated the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation by means of self-determination as a continuum wherein intrinsic motivation refers to the highest degree of self-determination or autonomy. Career autonomy is the engagement of students in career activity for its own sake and to experience the contentment and fulfillment resulting from participation. Deciding a career on one's own and successfully completing work on time, and being intrinsically motivated to decide a career that matches the interests and skills can be few career autonomous behaviours in students. A study (Paixão, 2014) results showed high correlations between career decision making subscales with External and Introjected Regulation and Identified regulation and Intrinsic Motivation. In addition, it was found that girls have higher levels of Identified Regulation as compared to their male counterparts. A study carried out by Henri, Morrell and Scott (2018) depict gender differences associated with average Autonomy Learning Scale (ALS) score wherein the secondary school male students had a higher average ALS (indicating higher levels of autonomy) than female students.

Career indecision may be common among many students due to lack of information which is found to be the primary source of indecision apart from low self-confidence, and anxiety driven career decision making (Callahan and Greenhaus, 1992). Less motivated students or students who are not allowed to find a career for themselves by their guardians may develop tendencies that are too often problematic for them when it comes to choosing a career and may dropout from the institution in the near future due to low academic performance and less interest in the subject. Career indecision can be defined as the "inability to select a university major or occupation" (Borgen & Hiebert, 2006). Many students are not aware of their own aptitude and may fail to decide a good career for themselves which may lead to various mental health issues due to the negative feelings regarding their career indecisiveness. A study carried out by Goliath (2012) has shown gender differences in career indecision. The results showed a statistically significant differences in the dimension 'Inconsistent Information' and 'Lack of Readiness' based on gender but no statistically significant difference was found in 'Lack of Information' among male and female students. During the past decades, researchers have pointed out career indecision as a major concern in career-related research. Also, it has been reported that students' indecision regarding career choices can be positively related to neuroticism (Chartrand, Rose, Elliott, Marmarosh, & Caldwell, 1993). It is evident from the literature that students' self-efficacy beliefs (Betz &

Luzzo, 1996), the quality of relationships with guardians and peers (Blustein et al., 1995; Felsman & Blustein, 1999), and their own self-esteem (Santos, 2001) are negatively related to career indecision.

1.1. Purpose of the study

In India, parents are very much involved in the career decision process of their children which is sometimes beneficial for them but can also hinder their own intrinsic capabilities to decide a career for themselves. It is quite necessary for students to spend more time in studies to have a crude idea about their own career interests and aptitude in the particular course of study. Students are forced to choose the wrong career by the elders because technical/professional courses are given more emphasis than the non-professional courses in India. Adolescents are not encouraged enough to become capable and successfully choose amongst the right career by spending more time on career exploration. Therefore, the purpose of the present study is to examine the impact of study hours on students' and how does it affects their career autonomy and career indecision. In addition, gender differences in career autonomy and indecision are also assessed by the present researcher.

1.2. Objectives:

1. To examine the relationship between career autonomy and career indecision of students.
2. To investigate the effect of gender and number of study hours per day on career decision making autonomy and career indecision of students.

1.3. Hypothesis:

Ha1: There will be a significant negative relationship between career decision making autonomy and career indecision of students.

Ha2: There will be significant effect of gender on career decision making autonomy and career indecision of students.

Ha3: There will be significant effect of study hours on career decision making autonomy and career indecision of students.

II. Research Methodology

2.1. Design

A quantitative research design was used for quantitative analysis.

2.2. Sample

The sample (N=230) comprised of school and college students of Aligarh and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh) studying in different courses. The mean age of the participants was 20.63 years (SD= 3.129). There was an unequal ratio of male (f=141, 61.3%) and female (f=89, 38.7%) students. Number of study hours was taken as the independent variable for univariate analysis and includes three levels: less than one hour (f=65, 28.3%), two to four hours (f=109, 47.4%) and more than four hours (f=56, 24.3%). The sample was taken from an online source (Google forms) through random sampling method.

2.2. Tool Used

1. *Career Decision Making Proficiency Scale (CDMPS)*: This scale was developed and standardized by the present investigator (scale standardization is under review for publication) through universal proportion agreement method finalized by 8 expert's assessment. The overall content validity index on relevancy of the scale was found to be 0.93 and in terms of simplicity, content validity was 0.95. The content validity ratio was found to be 0.68 and proportion of experts agreeing on the scale items as 'essential items' was 0.88.

The CDMPS consists of 30 items in total parted in two subscales measuring different career developmental constructs. Subscale1 has 14 items divided and 3 dimensions namely career autonomy (6 items), career maturity (5 items) and career reiteration (3 items). Subscale2 has 16 items divided and 2 dimensions namely career indecision (11 items) and career resoluteness (5 items). The reliability of subscale1 and subscale2 were 0.80 and 0.87 respectively. Kappa statistic (inter-rater reliability) for subscale1 was found to be 0.77 and that of subscale2 was 0.72. Factorial validity (through factor analysis) of subscale1 was found to be 53% and that of subscale2 was found to be 51%.

For the present study only career autonomy and career indecision dimensions were used from subscale1 and subscale2 of career decision making proficiency scale respectively.

2.3. Statistical Analysis

The statistical procedures used consisted of both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The survey data was analyzed by means of most appropriate statistical techniques used in SPSS version 20.0 as per the objectives and proposed hypothesis. Statistical technique Pearson's correlation was used to assess the relationship between the variables and t-test was used to find gender differences among variables under study. One-way ANOVA was used to examine the differences in study hours and its impact on students' career autonomy and indecision.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Prior to the main analysis, preliminary analysis was done to check the assumptions for all parametric statistics used for the data analysis. The researchers confirm the normality, linearity of the data and outliers were checked using boxplot. Homogeneity of variances was checked and all variables were metric in nature.

Table1. Showing correlation between variables (N=230)

Variables	Career Autonomy	Career Indecision
Career Autonomy	1	-0.223*
Career Indecision		1
<i>Mean</i>	22.57	3.95
<i>SD</i>	32.37	8.44

*correlation significant at 0.05 level

The first objective of the study was to examine the relationship between career autonomy and career indecision of students. The results (Table1) obtained showed that career decision making autonomy and career indecision are negatively correlated with each other ($r=-0.223$, $p<0.05$). It means that there is a significant inverse relationship between the two variables; if career autonomy will increase, career indecision will decrease and vice-versa. This result is in support of Hypothesis Ha1 that there will be a significant negative relationship between career decision making autonomy and career indecision of students.

Table2. Showing gender differences in career autonomy and career indecision (N=230)

Variables	Gender	N	M	SD	t-value	p-value
Career	Male	141	22.44	4.13	-0.67	>0.05 ^a
Autonomy	Female	89	22.79	3.67		
Career	Male	141	32.59	8.71	0.49	>0.05 ^a
Indecision	Female	89	32.03	8.02		

a: p-value not significant; df=228

The first halve segment of the second objective was to investigate the effect of gender on career decision making autonomy and career indecision of students. The results (Table2) yielded insignificant effects of gender on their career autonomy, $t(228)=-0.67$, $p>0.05$, and career indecision, $t(228)=0.49$, $p>0.05$. Thus, this result does not support hypothesis Ha2 that there will be significant effect of gender on career decision making autonomy and career indecision of students. The second halve segment of the second objective was to investigate the effect of number of study hours per day on career decision making autonomy and career indecision of students.

Table3. Showing effect of study hours on career developmental variables

<i>Source</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
Career Autonomy	17.647	2	8.823	0.561	0.571
Career Indecision	539.463	2	269.732	3.878	0.022
	15788.380	227	69.552		

The results (Table3) showed a significant difference in study hours on career indecision, $F(2,227)=3.878, p<0.05$, of students. The post-hoc results showed that students studying for less than 1 hour ($M=33.36, SD=8.65, p=0.41$) daily and those studying for more than 4 hours ($M=29.68, SD=8.17, p=0.41$) differed significantly on career indecision. The effect of study hours on career autonomy, $F(2,227)=0.561, p>0.05$, of students was found to be insignificant. Thus, the results supports the hypothesis Ha3 that there will be significant effect of study hours on career decision making autonomy and career indecision of students.

It is concluded that career autonomy and career indecision are entirely different developmental constructs and can't be present in a student at the same time. Career decision making autonomy should be learned by the students at schools and colleges to decide a way out for their career development and success. Career indecision must be dealt with utmost care as it may hinder the academic growth of a student. It is apparent that students perceive the same environment at academic institutions and hence are taught by the same teacher. This can have an effect on the thinking of both male and female students when it comes to choosing a career on their own. Hence, no significant differences were found on gender basis in this study. Also, the results suggest that increasing study hours can decrease the career indecisiveness in students. It is important to be aware about the information and materials for better career exploration. The more the students engage themselves in study, less indecisive they will become regarding career choice.

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