

Research Article

Career Maturity of Higher Secondary Students in Relation to their Parental Support

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Abstract

The ability to make well-informed, practical, and suitable job decisions that take into account cognitive, emotional, and psychological aspects is known as career maturity. Higher levels are associated with greater job satisfaction, effective employment, and better job crafting. It entails self-evaluation, career planning, and comprehension of occupational information. Higher secondary students frequently have poor professional maturity, which indicates a need for better career counseling to assist them in making realistic, well-informed job decisions. It entails being prepared to handle responsibilities related to professional growth, integrating cognitive abilities and attitudes regarding job selection. For higher secondary students (classes XI–XII), parental support is essential for academic achievement, self-worth, and stress management; these factors frequently result in improved grades, increased self-esteem, and fewer behavioral problems. Active participation through emotional support, upholding high standards for education, keeping an eye on study habits, and offering materials for competitive tests are all components of effective support. Hence, the study "Career Maturity of Higher Secondary Students in Relation to Their Parental Support" is significant and need-based. The investigator selected the 1050 samples from various higher secondary schools of Tamil Nadu by using stratified random sampling technique. The statistical techniques used in this study were percentage analysis, descriptive analysis, differential analysis and correlational analysis. The findings of the study would be very helpful to enhance the academic achievement of higher secondary students and benefit the target research population.

Keywords: Career Maturity, Higher Secondary Students, Parental Support, Academic Achievement, Education, Job Selection

Introduction

Career maturity among higher secondary students refers to a person's preparedness to make informed, age-appropriate, and realistic choices regarding their careers. It demonstrates the cognitive and emotional skills necessary to effectively handle vocational development tasks, including career exploration, planning, and choosing a profession that matches personal strengths and preferences. Parental support for higher secondary students (usually classes XI–XII) refers to the active engagement, nurturing actions, and supply of resources by parents to improve their child's academic success, emotional health, and social skills. It includes academic assistance, financial support, emotional backing, and consistent interaction with school staff.

Review of Literature

Das (2023) investigated the career maturity of higher secondary school students in relation to their academic achievement in Mayurbhanj district, Odessa, using survey method. Out of the 24 government-aided higher secondary schools in Mayurbhanj district, four schools were randomly selected, and from them 120 students (60 males and 60 females) were selected as study samples using random sampling method. The mean, standard deviation, t-test and Karl Pearson's correlation techniques were used to analysis the relationship between career maturity and academic achievement. A major finding of this study was that the students with high academic achievement differed significantly from those with low academic achievers in career maturity.

Jacy et al. (2023) Impact of career development intervention module on gender, income level and academic achievement in Saudi Arabia. This study aimed to investigate the impact of implementation of the career maturity intervention module among the students according to the variables of gender and financial income with the dependent variables of career maturity, career indecision, and career decision-making self-efficacy, through MANOVA (multivariate analysis of variance). There were no statistically significant differences in the effect of the career development intervention on career maturity, career indecision, and career decision-making self-efficacy among high school students based on

gender or family financial income. This could be as a result of the way people in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia live without any daily life necessities.

Chen and Mok (2023) examined how students' perceptions of parental academic involvement and goal orientations related to their academic buoyancy and adaptability in mathematics learning. A sample of 1,164 Chinese junior high school students participated in the study. The results obtained using structural equation modelling indicated that after controlling for family socioeconomic status and gender, perceived parental involvement positively affected the students' academic buoyancy and adaptability. Furthermore, parental involvement was significantly associated with students' mastery and performance-approach goal orientations, which further partially mediated the relationship between parental involvement and academic buoyancy and adaptability.

Lemessa et al. (2023) attempted to explore parents' involvement in education activities to improve their children's academic achievement. A sample of 292 households was selected from 5th to 8th grade students in four schools. Descriptive analysis showed that 19% of the respondents were not actively involved in giving advice, guiding, and counselling their children at home. 67% of the respondents showed medium parental involvement in helping their children, while 14% of respondents showed good parental involvement in education at home. Similarly, the study revealed that 53% of the respondents were not participating in school activities at all, 35% were medium participation, and 13% were well involved in school activities.

Need and Significance of the Study

Examining the career maturity of higher secondary students in connection with parental support is essential since, during this crucial and stressful period, students frequently have uncertain career aspirations and encounter growing indecisiveness. Parental engagement acts as a vital, immediate factor in alleviating this uncertainty. Studies show that although parental support might not directly enhance career decisiveness, it serves as a safeguard against anxiety, lowering career indecision in students. In a fast-evolving world, adolescents need support to match their abilities with career opportunities to avoid future stress and discontent. The demanding atmosphere of higher secondary education necessitates robust support systems for students, with parents being a key and influential part. Research indicates that elements such as being in a rural or urban area and the degree of parental engagement

greatly affect a student's preparedness for their future profession. This research assists in determining the most effective ways for parents to aid students' career development during this transition, reducing the chances of career uncertainty and negative academic results. Hence, the investigator felt willing to do this study.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the level of career maturity of higher secondary students.
2. To find out the level of parental support of higher secondary students.
3. To find whether there is any significant difference in career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students with respect to their type of school, father's education, mother's education, and family income.
4. To find whether there is any significant relationship between career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students.

Hypothesis of the Study

1. There is any significant difference in career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students with respect to their type of school, father's education, mother's education, and family income.
2. There is any significant relationship between career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students.

Methodology

The investigator opted to choose the survey method for the study. A stratified random sampling technique was adopted for selecting a sample from the population. Taking into account the strata type of school, father's education, mother's education, and family income, the investigator selected the 1,050 samples from various higher secondary schools in the districts of Tamil Nadu. The investigator utilized the standardized tool, the Career Maturity Inventory, which was developed by John O. Crites and Mark L. Savickas (2011), and the Parental Support Questionnaire was developed and standardized by the investigator and research supervisor in 2022. The investigator applied important statistical techniques to analyze the research data.

Testing of Objectives and Hypothesis

Objective 1: To find out the level of career maturity of higher secondary students.

Table 1: Level of career maturity of higher secondary students

S.No	Variable	Low		Moderate		High	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Career Maturity	167	15.90	621	59.14	262	24.95

It is inferred from the above table that 15.90% of higher secondary students have low, 59.14% of them have moderate and 24.95% of them have high level of career maturity. It is observed from the above results that the majority of the Higher Secondary students in the study area had a moderate level in Career Maturity.

Objective 2: To find out the level of parental support of higher secondary students.

Table 2: Level of parental support of higher secondary students

S.No	Variable	Low		Moderate		High	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Parental Support	137	13.05	642	61.14	271	25.81

It is inferred from the above table that 13.05% of higher secondary students have low, 61.14% of them have moderate and 25.81% of them have high level of parental support. It is observed from the above results that the majority of the higher secondary students in the study area had a moderate level in parental support.

Hypothesis 1: There is any significant difference in career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students with respect to their type of school, father's education, mother's education, and family income.

Table 3: Difference among boys', girls' and co-education school higher secondary students in their career maturity and parental support

S.No.	Variables	Source of variation	Sum of square s	df	Mean square	Calculated 'F' value	Remarks
1.	Career Maturity	Between	745.753	2	372.876	20.77	S
		Within	24176.324	1047	17.948		
2.	Parental Support	Between	6991.384	2	3495.692	15.45	S
		Within	304651.431	1047	226.170		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 'F' value (20.77, 15.45) is greater than the table value at 0.01 level of significance. Hence the respective framed hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the result shows that there is significant difference among boys', girls' and co-education schools' higher secondary students in Career Maturity and Parental Support.

Table 4: Difference among illiterate, school education, and college education of fathers in relation to career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students

S.No.	Variables	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	Calculated 'F' value	Remarks
1.	Career Maturity	Between	144.677	2	72.339	31.61	S
		Within	3080.189	1047	2.287		
2.	Parental Support	Between	127.273	2	63.636	20.47	S
		Within	4185.969	1047	3.108		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 'F' value (31.61, 20.47) is greater than the table value (6.64) at 0.01 level of significance. Hence the respective framed hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the result shows that there is significant difference among illiterate, school education, and college education of fathers in relation to career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students.

Table 5: Difference among illiterate, school education, and college education of mothers in relation to career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students

S.No.	Variables	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	Calculated 'F' value	Remarks
1.	Career Maturity	Between	338.984	2	169.492	57.44	S
		Within	3974.257	1047	2.950		
2.	Parental Support	Between	178.994	2	89.497	45.64	S
		Within	2640.979	1047	1.961		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 'F' value (57.44, 45.64) is greater than the table value (6.64) at 0.01 level of significance. Hence the respective framed hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the result shows that there is significant difference among illiterate, school education, and college education of mothers in relation to career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students.

Table 6: Difference exists among higher secondary students belonging to families with monthly incomes below Rs. 25,000, between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 50,000, and above Rs. 50,000 in terms of their career maturity and parental support

S. No.	Variables	Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	Calculated 'F' value	Remarks
1.	Career Maturity	Between	33.832	2	16.916	6.72	S
		Within	3388.242	1047	2.515		
2.	Parental Support	Between	202.164	2	101.082	45.04	S
		Within	3022.702	1047	2.244		

It is inferred from the above table that the calculated 'F' value (6.72, 45.04) is greater than the table value (6.64) at 0.01 level of significance. Hence the respective framed hypothesis is accepted. Thus, the result shows that there is significant difference among higher secondary students belonging to families with monthly incomes below Rs. 25,000,

between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 50,000, and above Rs. 50,000 in terms of their career maturity and parental support.

Hypothesis 2: There is any significant relationship between career maturity and parental support of higher secondary students.

Table 7: Table showing the significant relationship between career maturity and parental support

S.No	Variables	Correlation Coefficient	Significance
1	Career maturity and parental support	0.090	0.01 Significance

From the above table, it is inferred that the value of correlation between career maturity and parental support (0.090) are higher than the table value 0.081, to be significant at 0.01 level of significance. The correlation between these variables is positive and significant. Therefore, it is found that there is a significant and positive relationship between career maturity and parental support. Hence, the formulated hypothesis is accepted.

Educational Implication

Based on the findings, the investigator suggests the following educational implications:

1. Every parent should support higher secondary students in making the right career decisions after completing Class XII.
2. The educational administration should organize career awareness programs at the end of higher secondary education.
3. Class mentors should guide higher secondary students based on their interests and explain the pros and cons of different career options.
4. Higher secondary students should take responsibility for choosing their careers after carefully analysing the opportunities available in society.
5. In every school, counsellors should play a major role in guiding higher secondary students in their career decisions.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the investigator makes the following recommendations:

1. Special awareness-cum-motivation programmes should be organized in schools to

enhance the career maturity of female higher secondary students.

2. Orientation programmes on career maturity should be arranged for English medium higher secondary students to further improve their career maturity.
3. Focused efforts should be undertaken to improve the overall conditions of rural schools.
4. Intensive measures, including increased financial allocation, should be taken to improve the school climate in Tamil medium schools.
5. Counselling and guidance programmes should be organized to create a healthy and positive environment and to promote co-education at the higher secondary level.

Suggestion

1. Future studies may explore the role of digital literacy and technological skills in enhancing career maturity and employability among higher education students.
2. Comparative research can be conducted across different streams (Arts, Science, and Professional courses) to examine variations in career aspirations and preparedness.
3. Longitudinal studies may be undertaken to understand the long-term impact of parental support and school climate on students' academic and career success.
4. Further research can investigate the effectiveness of institutional interventions such as career guidance programmes, counselling, and skill development initiatives in improving employability.
5. Studies may focus on identifying specific socio-economic and psychological barriers faced by underprivileged and slow learners in achieving career success and suggest targeted support strategies.

Conclusion

The study concludes that parental support plays a significant role in enhancing the career maturity of higher secondary students. Students who receive proper guidance, encouragement, and career-related information from their parents tend to exhibit higher levels of career maturity, enabling them to make informed and effective career decisions.

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