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Career Choices of Secondary Students with Special Reference to Gender, Type of Stream and Parental Education

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Abstract
The study was carried out to find the career choices of students at secondary level. A sample of 200 students was drawn randomly from 12 secondary schools of district Srinagar within the age range of 16 plus. The selected sample comprised of arts and science streams. Chatterji's Non-Language Preference Record was administered to collect the data. Besides, parental education as one of the variables was also taken into consideration. Data was subjected to statistical treatment by applying percentages and 't' values. The results revealed some significant differences on the basis of gender and parental education in various career choices of the subjects under investigation.
Key Words: Career choices; Secondary students; Gender; Type of stream; Parental education.

Introduction: Appropriate choice of a career is reported to have received greater attention in the world of work (Kulshrestha, 1979). The modern society with its scientific and technological advancement, its division of labour and specialization of functions demand the fullest use of manpower at all levels. Our pressing need today is to harness and broaden the ways and means of proper utilization of manpower resources. Therefore, capacities and strengths require a proper direction. This will culminate into the fresh attempt towards research in career orientation with a view to understand the ways in which our teeming millions may choose their career (Mattoo and Sugra, 2007). This was realised some more than two decades ago when Government of India introduced 10+2+3 pattern of education in 1987. With the implementation of this system the students have to decide the main stream of education which they have to pursue after the completion of secondary education. Even the Kothari Education Commission (1964-66) observed that, "students are admitted to vocational courses unsystematically which results in the wastage of manpower and viz-a-viz. the expenditure earmarked on education. To overcome this malpractice, it is of paramount importance that right type of educational course/s be made available according to their aptitude and interest. It can be made possible if we initiate vocational guidance at school level which hitherto has been debated much but not implemented in letter and spirit.

Considerable amount of research has been carried out in the area of career education in India and abroad. A host of researchers have concentrated on a number of areas falling under cognitive, affective and demographical variables. Attempts have been made to study career choices of students in relation to intelligence, scholastic achievement and creativity (Habibollah, et al., 2010; Heinze, 2009; Ivcevic, 2007; Hamingthanzuala, 2001; Mattoo, 1994; Tulsi, 1985; Randhawa, 1977; Martin, 1975). Age, socio-economic status, type of institution and influence of parental education has also been the focus area (Jansari and Kumar, 1999; Anderson, 1993; Sujata, 1988; Yasmeen, 1985; Kumar, 1984; Mohan and Banth, 1975; Martin, 1975; Adams, 1974; Patel, 1967; Mowsesian, Health and Rothney, 1966; Crites, 1962; Abhilashi, 1956; Bell, 1938). Locale, personality factors, gender has been the interest area of researchers (Jansari and Kumar, 1999; Panday, 1975; Pangotra, 1965). The results of these studies reveal that interests are dependent upon these variables. The gender differences have also been reported to exist. It has also been reported that dichotomies like rural and urban play a significant role in shaping the interest patterns of students. Karimi, (2000) observed that changes in interest patterns occur due to environment, social status and specific abilities. However, Mehta (1970) concluded that parental education significantly contributes the changes in the interest patterns of individuals. While scanning the existing findings, it is reported that the results are not in uniform direction. Therefore, further exploration is needed to arrive at definite conclusions.

Need of the Study

Ever since the initiative made by Parson (1908) with regard to the development of meaningful theories of occupational choices and the subsequent ways and means of devising tools for the assessment of abilities and interests. The focal idea seems to have been towards the proper placement and comparable considerations of individuals towards a particular job. This has given birth to the strategy of "*right job for right individual"* which resulted into career based education to our youth. Despite these initiatives our country could not achieve the objectives the way idea was conceived. However, efforts are being made to provide job oriented courses to our teeming millions so that the opportunities of unemployment do not get closed. There has been a phenomenal growth in the establishment of vocational institutes throughout the country but while choosing the courses to be

studied by the youth to start their career guidance services do not seem to exist. Youth carry on their programmes and at the end of the day their precious time is consumed at employment directorates to find a placement either way. It sometimes culminates into the placement of square pegs into round wholes. Another core barrier in the career awareness channels goes to parents who seem to be reluctant in misdirecting their wards in the selection of career choices. Their intervention in most of the cases is responsible to guide their children in their own way and according to their own interest. Sometimes a parent is determined to put his child in a medical profession. On the other hand the other parent is ambitious to place his child in legal profession regardless of ignoring certain interests, aptitude and level of intelligence. With the result the youth are misled and misdirected and they cannot admit themselves with the academic activities in their colleges. Their mind is burdened with knowledge which is quite conflicting with their inborn urges, tendencies and the like (Ahluwalia, 1988). It is, therefore, of paramount importance that the Government authorities must provide a wide variety of structured programmes with occupational orientation in the curriculum instructions. This of course can stimulate career exploration among our youth with definite specialisation and will lead children to choose the best vocation that suits their aptitude. The present study is an attempt in this direction.

Objectives

Following objectives have been designed to carry the present investigation.

1. To find out the general pattern of career choices of secondary students.
2. To find and compare the career choices of students on the basis of gender.
3. To find and compare the career choices of students on the basis of the type of stream and
4. To find and compare the career choices of students on the basis of level of parental education.

Hypotheses

1. There shall be a significant difference between the mean scores of boys and girls on career choices.
2. Type of stream has a significant influence on the career choices of students.
3. Parental education has a significant influence on the career choices of students.

Design of the Study

Sample

A sample of 200 students (100 boys and 100 girls) was drawn from different secondary schools of Srinagar city (J&K). Twelve institutions participated in the investigation. The age of the subjects was 16 plus. The sample was drawn by using a purposive sampling technique.

Tools

The investigator collected the data by using the following tool/s.

1. **Chatterji's Non-Language Preference Record**. This tool covers ten interest areas viz. a) Fine arts, b) Literary, c) Scientific, d) Medical, e) Agriculture, f)Technical, g) Crafts, h) Sports, i) Out door and j) House hold.

Analysis of Data

The collected data was subjected to statistical analysis. Percentages, Mean, SD, and Test of significance were calculated. The information is presented in the below mentioned tables with indexed abbreviations like: *Fine arts (FA); Literary (LT);Scientific (SC); Medical, (MD);Agriculture(AG);Technical(TC);Crafts(CR); Outdoor(OD); Sports(SP) and Household(HH).*

Table 1.00: Showing the distribution of predominant career choices of students (Percent wise, N=100, each gender)

Gender	C A R E E R C H O I C E S									
	FA	LT	SC	MD	AG	TC	CR	OD	SP	HH
Male/s	3%	8%	19%	20%	4%	13%	7%	8%	13%	5%
Female/s	7%	10%	15%	23%	3%	9%	8%	6%	11%	8%

A perusal of table no. 1.00 (Fig. 1) reveals the predominant career choices of sample subjects on the basis of gender. The order of their career choice in preferential sequence in male subjects is found to be: Medical (20%), Scientific (19%), Technical (13%), Sports (13%), Literary (8%), Outdoor (8%), Crafts (7%), House hold (5%), Agriculture (4%) and Fine arts (3%). However, in case of females the order of vocational preference/s is reflected as: Medical (23%), Scientific (15%), Sports (11%), Literary (10%), Technical (9%), Crafts (8%),

House hold (8), Fine arts (7%), Outdoor (6%) and Agriculture (3%). The results reveal that medical choice seems to be dominant in both the genders followed by scientific choice. Least preference seems towards fine arts by male subjects and agriculture by females.

Table 2.00: Showing the significance of differences between the mean scores of boys and girls on career choices.

Career Choice	Gender (Boys) Mean	SD	SEm	Gender (Girls) Mean	SD	SEm	SED	t-value	Remarks
FA	24.33	4.55	0.46	26.17	5.40	0.54	0.71	2.592	@
LT	31.03	7.93	0.79	30.70	8.01	0.80	1.12	0.295	*
SC	32.64	7.49	0.75	33.72	7.86	0.79	1.09	0.991	*
MD	34.22	6.44	0.64	33.24	6.22	0.62	0.89	1.101	*
AG	19.33	4.60	0.46	19.23	4.41	0.46	0.65	0.154	*
TC	32.22	4.33	0.43	29.08	4.66	0.47	0.64	4.875	@
CR	27.33	4.66	0.47	29.31	4.44	0.45	0.65	3.046	@
OD	33.23	5.34	0.53	31.45	5.47	0.55	0.76	2.342	@
SP	23.34	4.56	0.46	24.68	4.78	0.48	0.66	2.030	@
HH	17.23	5.02	0.50	19.56	4.96	0.50	0.71	3.281	@

@ significant at 0.01 level * not significant

The results presented in table 2.00 (Fig. 2) reveal the significance of differences between the mean scores of boys and girls on vocational choice/s. The t values in six vocational interest areas (fine arts, t= 2.592; technical, t= 4.875; crafts, t= 3.046; out door, t= 2.342; sports, t= 2.030; household, t= 3.281) are reported to be significant at 0.01 and 0.05 level/s of confidence and in rest of the areas the differences failed to arrive at any level of confidence. From these results it is revealed that boys are inclined towards technical (M=32.22) and outdoor interests (M = 33.23) than girls. However, girls are reported to be higher in fine arts (M= 26.17), crafts (29.31), sports (M= 24.68) and household interest (M= 19.56) areas. Gender differences could not be established between boys and girls on literary, scientific, medical, and agriculture interests. It can be inferred that both the groups of students have inclination towards these areas to an equal extend. The results are in agreement with some of the studies carried earlier in the field (Nazima, 2009; Sugra, 2007; Mir, 1996; Porus, 1987; Raina, 1987; Rawal, 1984; Yadav, 1983; Kulshrestha, 1979; Sidhama, 1977; Vohra, 1977; Mathur, 1975).

Table 3.00: Showing the significance of differences between the mean scores of students with stream option on career choices (N=100 each).

Career Choice	Arts Stream Mean	SD	SEm	Science Stream Mean	SD	SEm	SED	t-value	Remarks
FA	29.33	4.35	0.44	26.14	4.40	0.44	0.623	5.120	@
LT	31.13	7.83	0.78	32.70	6.01	0.60	0.984	1.595	*
SC	32.04	7.44	0.74	34.72	7.76	0.78	1.075	2.493	@
MD	33.44	4.76	0.48	32.88	4.40	0.44	0.651	0.860	*
AG	19.33	4.88	0.49	22.33	4.44	0.44	0.659	4.552	@
TC	22.37	5.44	0.54	24.44	5.55	0.56	0.778	1.404	*
CR	29.34	5.42	0.54	28.58	6.70	0.67	0.861	0.883	*
OD	31.32	5.66	0.57	32.64	5.98	0.60	0.828	1.594	*
SP	23.44	4.56	0.46	24.44	5.22	0.52	0.694	1.441	*
HH	17.23	4.67	0.47	16.66	4.99	0.50	0.686	0.831	*

@ significant at 0.01 level *not significant

A perusal of table 3.00 (Fig. 3) reveals significance of differences between the mean scores of students in their career choices on the basis of subject preference. It is observed that subjects from science steam had significantly higher choice in scientific and agriculture fields than the subjects from arts streams. The obtained t value/s have been found to be significant at 0.01 level of confidence in fine arts (t= 5.120), scientific (t= 2.493) and agriculture (t= 4.552) areas. Besides, subjects from arts stream are reported to have higher leaning towards fine arts (M= 29.33) than the subjects from science streams (M= 26.14). However, the mean differences between the subjects under investigation failed to arrive at any level of confidence in literary, medical, technical, crafts, outdoor, sports and household areas of career choices. It can be inferred that stream option does not intervene the subjects to change their tendency in some of the career choices. The results are supported by some of the findings carried out earlier (Jamseeda, 2010; Mattoo and Nazima, 2010; Sugra, 2007; Rawal, 1984; Cervenka, 1977; Kelarikova, 1974).

Table 4.00: Showing the significance of differences between the mean scores of students with the level of parental education on career choices.

Career Choice	Children of Graduates Mean	SD	SEm	Children of Professionals Mean	SD	SEm	SED	t-value	Remarks
FA	25.34	4.53	0.45	26.14	4.40	0.44	0.630	1.270	*
LT	31.03	7.83	0.77	30.70	8.21	0.82	1.125	0.423	*
SC	32.66	7.39	0.74	35.72	7.76	0.78	1.075	1.032	*
MD	34.56	6.76	0.68	35.67	6.77	0.68	0.961	1.150	*
AG	19.55	5.69	0.57	23.24	5.89	0.59	0.820	4.500	@
TC	21.34	5.33	0.53	26.44	5.44	0.55	0.764	6.675	@
CR	28.44	5.33	0.53	29.55	4.98	0.50	0.729	1.523	*
OD	30.45	6.02	0.60	27.43	4.66	0.47	0.762	3.974	@
SP	23.77	5.66	0.57	24.55	5.89	0.59	0.673	1.159	*
HH	18.33	4.76	0.48	19.45	4.66	0.47	0.67	1.672	*

@ significant at 0.01 level * not significant

A close examination of table 4.00 (Fig. 4) reveals the significance of differences between the mean scores of the subjects in their career choices on the basis of parental education. Children of professionals are seen to have greater inclination towards agricultural (M=23.24, t=4.500) and technical interest (M=26.44, t= 6.675) than the children of graduates. The calculated t values are significant at 0.01 level of confidence. In the same table outdoor interest seems to be higher in case of the children of graduates (M=30.45, t=3.974) than the children of professionals (M= 27.43). Fine arts, literary, scientific, medical, crafts, sports and household as career choices could not differentiate these subjects on the basis of parental education. It can be inferred that both the groups have similar tendency/ leaning towards these choices. The results are in conformity with the studies carried out by other researchers (Mattoo and Nazima, 2010; Jamseeda, 2010; Naiema, 2008 Yasmeen, 1985).

Inferential observations

The study is concluded with the following observations

i) The most liked career choice has been reported to be medical followed by scientific and sports.
ii) Girls are seen to have higher inclination towards fine arts, crafts, house hold and sports activities as compared to boys. Technical and outdoor interest is found higher in boys than girls.
iii) Uniform tendency towards career choices like: literary, medical, scientific, and agriculture is found in both the genders.
iv) Type of stream (arts vs. science) could not make any difference in the career choices like: literary, medical, technical, crafts, sports and house hold. However, students from science stream have exhibited higher inclination towards agriculture and scientific choices than arts students. Fine arts as a career choice is reported to be higher among students belonging to arts stream.
v) Parental education could not make any significant difference in some of the career choices viz. fine arts, literary, scientific, medical, outdoor, sports and household. However, agriculture, and technical choices are seen to be higher among the children of professionals.

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