

Emotional intelligence, Cognitive Differentiation, Gender and Parental Influence as Factors in Career Decision Making

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Abstract— The present study is an attempt to find out the career decision making ability of career oriented boys and girl students in relation to their parental influence and cognitive differentiation ability and emotional intelligence. Career decision making is a cognitive process which is influenced by rational and emotional brain of an individual. Parents always play major role in career decision of their children. Thus, present study is aimed at examining the effect of emotional intelligence and parental influence and cognitive differentiation ability of career oriented boys and girls in career decision making ability. The study was conducted on 320 students of science and commerce stream by using 2x2x2x2 factorial design with fixed effect model consisting randomized sampling technique. They were asked to fill the questionnaires regarding emotional intelligence inventory by Thomas & Shushma (2003), Cognitive differentiation grid by (Manchanda and Hasan 1998) and finally career decision making questionnaire of Gati (1996). Contribution of these factors in generating variance upon career decision making have been done through multiple regression analysis.

Key Words: Career decision making, Cognitive differentiation, Emotional Intelligence, Gender and Parental influence.

I. INTRODUCTION

Career decision making is operationally defined as the acquisition of four career related behavioural steps suggested by horan (1979). These are defining the problem, generating alternatives and coming to action. If a subject has acquired these four abilities, he/she will said to be career wise decisive. Harren (1979, p. 119) defined a decision making model as a “description of psychological process in which one organizes information, deliberates among alternatives, and makes a commitment to a course of action.” This

definition reflects the cognitive, analytical nature of decision models. Bettman et al., 1998 argues that needing to justify a decision may lead to the use of decision strategies which are based on easily seen and communicable relationships among options (relational heuristics). Many individuals engage in heuristic processing strategies during the course of strategic decision making (Schwenk, 1995; reviewed in Bazerman, 2002; Das & Teng, 1999; Hodgkinson, 2001b; Maule & Hodgkinson, 2002). Another big and important reason behind this uncertainty is incomplete knowledge about a particular career as well as the complexities of the twenty-first century’s world of work and the happening constant changes that characterizes it, turns career and career related decision into multidimensional, unpredictable paths (Blustein, 2006; Bright & Pyror, 2005; Gelatt, 1989; Krieshock, Black & Mckay, 2006; Mitchell, Levin, & krumboltz, 1999; Savickas, 2000, 2005; Van Esbroeck, Tibos, & Zaman, 2005). Cognitive complexity or differentiation concerns the way occupations are represented in the career decision maker’s mind. Adolescents today in high school have sufficient knowledge of the world of work and they are in a position to make a career choice (Cortes S and Schepers, 2004). Some studies focused on the relationship between cognitive complexities and congruence of vocational choice (Bodden, 1970) and vocational preference (Winer, Hasse, Gleen, Esari, & Bodden, 1979). Cognitive development has received an enormous degree of attention from cross cultures. Young and Valach (1996) reasoned that emotion has been neglected in Vocational psychology and career development literature. They asserted that career is strongly connected to emotions, and therefore, awareness of emotions in understanding career is

essentials. That’s why emotional intelligence has been taken as an important factor in career development. Robert J. Emmerling (2001) studied the relation between emotional intelligence and career commitment and decision process. Emmerling, Cherniss, (2003) studied the relation between emotional intelligence and career decision making process assuming that emotional intelligence abilities as correctly perceiving, using, understanding and managing emotions to improve career decision making. Young and Valach (1996) reasoned that emotion has been neglected in the vocational psychology and career development literature. They asserted that career is strongly connected to emotions, and, therefore, awareness of emotion in understanding career is essential. Often, it is believed that males are high cognitively complex than females. That is to say that there also gender issue in cognitive complexity. Therefore, in the present study, the effect of gender difference on career decision making has also been examined. The effect of gender in career has remained a constant feature in career decision making.

2. METHODOLOGY

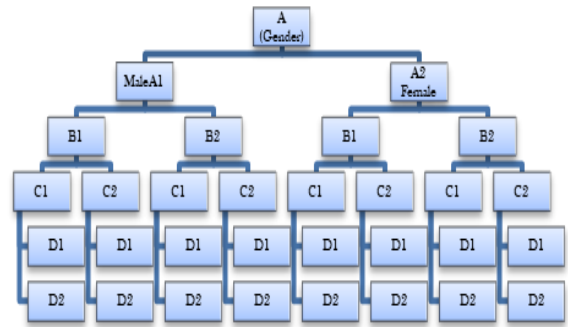
The present study is an attempt to find out the career decision making ability of career oriented boys and girl students in relation to their parental influence and cognitive differentiation ability and emotional intelligence. Career decision making is a cognitive process which is governed (influenced) by rational and emotional brain of an individual. And parents always play major role in career decision of their children. Thus, present study is aimed at examining the effect of emotional intelligence and parental influence and cognitive differentiation ability of career oriented boys and girls in career decision making ability.

Sample

320 students were served as subjects for this study. They were drawn from the reputed schools of the city. Selection of the schools was decided on the basis of their education system which was C.B.S.E. (Central board Of Secondary Education) based education system. Subjects were matched on the quality of schooling, father’s education and occupations and facilities provided to the students and some other background variables. It was decided to choose career oriented students of science and commerce subjects. It

was kept in mind to keep up the homogeneity of school while collecting the sample.

There were 20 subjects in each group and it was decided to choose the students of 10th to 12th because after finishing examinations of class 10th students start thinking about the career they would like to choose likewise they select the subject they find interesting that is why such a group was selected for the study. There were four independent variables and each factor involved two levels of gender [male (A₁) and female (A₂)], emotional intelligence [above average (B₁), and below average (B₂)], cognitive differentiation [high (C₁) and low (C₂)], Parental influence [high (D₁) and low (D₂)] and thus a 2x2x2x2 factorial design with fixed effect model was employed consisting of 16 experimental groups by stratified random sampling technique.



Tools

In this study, three tests and one schedule have been used. First, Emotional Intelligence Inventory was developed by Thomas and Shushma (2003). This is a 50 item self rating

Sample with their code names

scale, which gives a measure of overall emotional intelligence. The tool has internal consistency (Chronbach alpha=0.88; N=492) and factorial validity. The current validity of the tool has been estimated using a sociometric rating method (r =0.58; N= 192). Second test is Cognitive Differentiation Grid by (Leena Manchanda & Dr. B. Hasan,1998) which is based on Kelly’s Repertory Grid technique; Cognitive Differentiation Grid constructed by Manchanda and Hasan (1998) to measure the ability of cognitive differentiation among career oriented subjects. The test- retest reliability of this grid is .80 after an interval of two weeks.

SCORING

The scheme of each test is according to its manual except the parental influence schedule because it was self-made and the scoring scheme of this particular questionnaire was thus that positive statements had 2 points if answered *more*. And negative statement had 1 point if answered in *less*.

Procedure

Firstly, students of science and commerce faculties were listed and randomly stratified into two equal groups according to their gender: 160 male and 160 females, thus 320 in all. Then subjects of both the groups were given emotional intelligence test (Thomas and Shushma, 2003) and Cognitive Differentiation Grid (Leena Manchanda & Dr. B. Hasan). In each cell, 20 subjects were randomly placed according to their above average and below average score on emotional intelligence scale (Thomas and Shushma, 2003). All the subjects were divided as above and below average intelligence of emotion. These subjects were assigned in two groups using cognitive differentiation Grid (Leena Manchanda & Dr. B. Hasan, 1998) with the help of mid points technique and subjects were also given the parental Influence schedule. These finally selected subjects were put to score on career decision making scale (CDMS) constructed by (Vijya Tiwari and Dr. B.Hasan). Multiple regression and qualitative analysis method is used for the data interpretation.

Main Study

After the initial and final evaluation of students’ age and their school’s background and education system, final collection of the data was taken with the permission of the head of the respective institution. Each student was given the test one by one after giving the test and good rapport was established with the students by talking to them and explaining to them about the test and career decision making. Subjects were asked to fill their name, age and their father’s occupation.

3. RESULTS

For quantifying the responses scores were assigned and statistical devices were used. The scores obtained from the scoring manuals were obtained on all the independent factors namely, emotional intelligence, cognitive differentiation, parental influence and male

and female subjects were equally distributed into high and low category of emotional intelligence and cognitive differentiation and parental influence. The mean scores and SDs and ANOVA of the groups were computed (Fig. no.1). It may be observed that the mean score of females of above average emotional intelligence ($x = 114.40$) is somewhat higher than the males ($x = 112.25$) of above average intelligence group. Multiple regression analysis of all the independent variables on career decision making. Multiple regression was done by SPSS. SPSS was used to analyze only required analysis and thus regression analysis was completed. As evident from regression analysis (fig no.2) the main effect cognitive differentiation was the most important predictor of career decision making explaining 22.5% of variance. It indicated that as cognitive differentiation reduced career decision making improved. The second important predictor was parental influence which explained only 21.7% variance in career decision making. The least important factor was emotional intelligence explaining 20.7% variance in career decision making though the indicating as emotional intelligence increases so career decision making.

Group	Emotional intelligence		Cognitive Differentiation		Parental Influence		Gender	
	Above Average	Below Average	High	Low	More	Less	Male	Female
Mean	112.92	93.20	531.24	343.12	21.24	2.77	3.91	5.22
S.D.	9.57	5.23	62.81	42.91	12.56	1.58	1.50	.493

Fig.1 Variable wise mean scores and S.D.s of

Predictors	R	R square	Adjusted R Square	F-Ratio
Cognitive differentiation	.484	.234	.225	23.87**
Parental Influence	.487	.237	.217	11.95**
Emotional intelligence	.487	.237	.207	7.87**

Fig 2. Multiple regression analysis of all the independent variables on career decision making

4.DISCUSSION

The findings of the study generally support the hypotheses of the study. The effect of emotional intelligence was noted with regard to career decision making ability, the advantage lying with above intelligent students. High level of cognitive differentiation was also observed as an important factor in career decision making than lower one. Parental influence of higher magnitude also appear to play a detrimental role in career decision making.

5.CONCLUSION

The effect of emotional intelligence was noted with regard to career decision making ability, the advantage lying with above intelligent students. High level of cognitive differentiation was also observed as an important factor in career decision making than lower one. Parental influences of higher magnitude also appear to play a detrimental role in career decision making. All the two way interactions except gender and emotional intelligence (AXB), and gender and cognitive differentiation (AXD), turn out to be significant at all acceptance level. All the three way interactions namely, gender, emotional intelligence and parental influence (AXBXC) and gender, emotional intelligence and cognitive differentiation (AXBXD) and emotional intelligence, parental influence and cognitive differentiation (BXCXD) and gender, parental influence and cognitive differentiation (AXCXD) have been found to be significant at acceptable level of confidence. Four way interactions could not found significant.

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